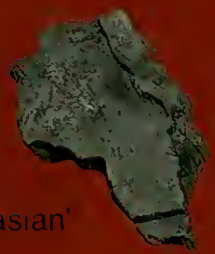

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contents

introduction
cherie wendelken

Modern Asia is a landscape of rapid change – environmental and social transformations have been fueled by economic growth, increased population, and advancing technologies. International alarm over the current economic crisis only enhances the sense of instability in what was until recently the globe's most rapidly expanding economic region. As a result, in recent years a new identity has emerged for Asia in contemporary architectural discourse. In the writings of Rem Koolhaas and others, Asia as an idea has become ephemerality, megaform, placelessness, globalization. These notions displace – even invert – earlier European and American constructs of Asia as a timeless or ancient non-modern realm against which to measure the modern. Yet strangely, the new idea of Asia constructs an embodiment of the postmodern – a place of another extreme where history is willfully abandoned, visual meaning is casually discursive, and all built form is tentative. The city of Tokyo becomes a discourse about ephemerality. The rebuilding of Singapore becomes an emblem of cultural tabula rasa and bigness.

Distance and complexity – both cultural and geographic – conspire to perpetuate the essentializing of Asia in European and American architectural criticism. This issue of Thresholds re–examines the idea of Asian architecture by looking carefully at the diverse sources for the formation of identity.

The first section examines the diverse roles that history can play in contemporary Asian practice. Bundit Kanisthakhon analyses the rapid change and reconstruction of housing in Bangkok by looking at technology and process, rooting his own designs and theories in personal memories. This confrontation with personal experience and childhood memory is both an antidote to overarching discussions of housing "tradition" and a powerful reminder that history and tradition are indeed a form of collective memory. By contrast, Stephen Cairns takes us through a history not of internal experience but of being seen. The colonial encounter with Southeast Asia created a regional identity inversely compared with that of Europe. In this Orientalist construct, fragmented island geography and the natural were conflated and aestheticized into a notion of an exotic Southeast Asian "urbanism" of the wild, with an architecture of the ephemeral.

Eric Howeler examines contemporary architectural practice in a range of Asian contexts in order to question over–simplified strategies employed by architects to give national identity to modern buildings. By highlighting the instability of meaning in even the most literal quotations from historical architecture, he reminds us that the debates over "style" do not just reflect, but in fact forge identity as countries such as Malaysia emerge as independent states in the international arena.

But where Southeast Asian architects are still concerned with issues of tropicality and the natural for its identity, in China the discourses of politics and economics have dominated criticism and restricted the forms of expression. Kerry S. Fan's review of the Chinese Architectural Journal illustrates the effects of politics on not only the form, but the technology and materials favored in various stages of China's history since 1949. As the singular publishing organ of the academy, its contents chronicle the state's desire to harness built form – and history – as propaganda. This unified voice of belief and practice is in marked contrast to the landscape of contemporary China, as demonstrated in San San Kwan's article on Shanghai Tang. The political sources for a modern Chinese identity are made into absurd commodities. The government's attempts to police national form and meaning are subverted in Tang's successful venture to give China its first international "brand."

Andrew Li's article on 12th century Chinese hall structures presents an interesting intersection between historical scholarship of traditional building methods and computer/math techonology. In acccordance with the methods of shape grammars proposed by George Stiny, Li is attempting to quantify the underlying structual logic of these halls.

The two articles that examine the Indian context both focus on the problems of foreign interpretation of Indian architecture. Ritu Bhatt and Alka Patel look for sources of national and ethnic architectural identity in colonial historiography. The colonial enterprise included the surveying and control of history for political ends, and the narrative of cultural conflict that British historians wrote into categories of style labeled "Hindu" or "Muslim" serve to perpetuate ethnic conflict rather than create a national patrimony. Another kind of conflict seems to be played out in the photo essay on Nek Chand's garden. The profusion of hand–crafted subjects in the garden seem to defy the evacuated, brutalist design of Le Corbusier's Chandigargh. The squatters which rim the site seem to echo the isane impossibility for le Corbusier's vision of India.

The study of national identity in architecture must examine the sometimes conflicting nature of a nation's identity as well as its expression in built form.

The final section on Japanese architecture retrieves sources of modern Japanese identity in the still–uncharted history of Japan's militarist prewar years. Akiko Takenaka focuses on state–sponsored exhibition architecture in this politically charged period to underscore the conflicting meanings that can be read into a single building.

Finally, like Bundit Kanisthakhon's article in the first section, Toshihiro Komatsu takes us back to the realm of personal experience. The Inverted Office N5I–113 makes no explicit references to Japanese or Asian identity in either its form or the accompanying essay – let us therefore resist the temptation to read into this work the discourses of the new Orientalism, by for example privileging its "entropic" quality or ephemerality as somehow essentially Asian. I would prefer to think of this work, in the artist's words as " a the transformation of private space into a pubic sign," and caution that we do not create overcohesion out of the diverse and sometimes conflicting individual voices in architectural practice, history, and criticism in contemporary Asia.

Figures 1-4

Cities in Asia have experienced radical and unprecedented change, economically, culturally, and architecturally. Fueled by foreign capital, the building boom in Shanghai engendered slick new office buildings across the city, transforming it into the largest construction site in the world. [Figures 1-7] At the height of the boom, construction crews worked eight-hour shifts twenty-four hours a day. City officials razed entire neighborhoods in Beijing and relocated urban populations to suburbs to make way for new construction. [Figures 8, 9] In Bangkok, a forest of construction cranes populated the skyline, and a thin layer of construction dust covered every surface of the city.[1] Today, those cranes rust among half-clad skyscrapers. The cityscapes of these Asian cities have been altered completely and dramatically.

Architects and planners played a critical role in the reshaping of those cities. The architecture profession has evolved to address emerging new markets, and transformed itself into a fully global practice. American firms practicing in Asia, where American technical expertise and American design are in high demand, must confront issues of national identity and cultural difference.[2] The modern architectural practice participates in these vast transformations, but does so without any extensive theoretical component. The academy, conversely, treats the massive amounts of construction as not-yet-history, and the building types as not-quite-criticism-worthy.[3] The result is a tremendous amount of new construction, and a regional transformation- its cities, cultures, political and social systems- that is largely unseen, unspoken, and untheorized.

The rift between the practice of architecture and architectural theory appears wider today than ever before. Hal Foster, referring to the separation of art practice from art theory, notes two common misconceptions: 1) "art is not theoretical and/or political in its own terms," and 2) "theory is ornamental and politics external."[4] These two misconceptions result from a reductive separation of theory and practice, and severely limits both critical art and architectural practices.

1 "Shanghai already has 53 buildings of more than 30 floors, and a total of 411 buildings standing between 20 and 29 stories," Clifford Pearson, "Reports from the Pacific Rim, Architects find Business from Indonesia to China," *Architectural Record*, July 1997, p. 81. The building boom, which until recently affected almost every major city in South East Asia has recently come to a standstill. With the South Korean, Indonesian and Thai currencies greatly devalued, their economies have been restructured to comply with guidelines set down by the International Monetary Fund.

2 "The American construction industry exports $2.5 billion worth of services every year, a figure that has tripled over the past decade." Cited in Bradford McKee, "The Multinational Report, American Architects are Shaping Skylines Around the World," *Architecture Magazine*, October, 1997, p. 126.

3 Indeed, academic architecture often ignores the projects of corporate practice unless they are located historically.

4 Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, p. xvi.

Figures 4-7

Approaching the division between practice and theory as a difference between two practices, or two fields of practice, rather than as a division between two distinct and exclusive aspects of the discipline of architecture, provides a useful analytical framework.[5] As two fields of practice within a spectrum of different practices, each field has the ability to inform, intersect and inflect the other.

A theoretically informed practice is necessary to negotiate the terrain of contemporary architecture, as it engages a complex and diverse global landscape. The economic and urban developments in Asia are sites of cultural interface, in which Asian clients are commissioning designs from American and European architects to produce symbols of a new Asia. At this interface, theorists and practitioners (academics and professionals) must contend with issues not only of cultural and linguistic difference, but also of cultural identity, symbolism, history, geography, nationalism, agency, and legitimation.

In the face of rapid globalization, and unprecedented construction and destruction in Asian cities, architectural historian Kenneth Frampton's theoretical position can be seen as a counter measure. Frampton's seminal essay, entitled "Critical Regionalism, Modern Architecture and Cultural Identity", calls for an architectural practice conscious of the global situation but responsive to local conditions. The term 'critical regionalism' is borrowed from Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, whose model of regionalism is positioned against a romantic regionalism in which "selected regional elements linked in memory with forlorn eras are inserted into new buildings, constructing scenographic settings for arousing affinity and 'sympathy' in the viewer."[6] Examples of romantic regionalism abound in Asia. Cosmetic details and pagoda hats on buildings operate as superficial cultural signs. In the name of preserving a cultural identity, the generic city is wrapped in the semiotic garb of traditional symbolic legitimation. [*Architectural Record* 8-11][7]

On the other hand, Cesar Pelli's Petronas Towers, Skidmore Owings and Merrill's Jin Mao Tower, and C.Y. Lee's Grand 50 Tower each employ strategies that could be categorized as critically regionalist. These prominent Asian projects are conceived of as representations of an

5 The ideas articulated here were first developed in collaboration with Kenny Berger in a short essay entitled "Revisiting the Theory/Practice Problem," *Para-tactics 2*, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Fall 1997.

6 Tzonis and Lefaivre, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?" p. 489.

7 A counter argument is made by an American architect, "High-rise buildings don't have a national character, they create their own culture." as quoted in Mitchell Pacelle, "U.S. Architects in Asia: Only Way to Go Is Up," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 21, 1996.

Figures 8-11

emerging Asia and embody the collective images of the city, region, or nation that commissioned them.[8] These monumental signifiers are symbolically predetermined. Praised by critics and journals for their cultural sensitivity, they use regional references as a source of legitimation, while subscribing to superficial and outmoded cultural signifiers.

The Petronas towers in Kuala Lumpur, designed by American architect Cesar Pelli, and commissioned by the prime minister of Malaysia, Mahathir Mohammad, were built to house the national oil company. Conceived as symbols for the new Malaysia, the towers stand in the center of Kuala Lumpur, on the former site of the British Selangor Turf Club. [figure 12] The design addresses the cultural context by making references to Malaysian craftsmanship for interior details.[9] In the words of the architect, "cultural elegance is achieved by utilizing Malaysian materials and design, controlled and modulated by the steel grid of the facade."[10] The tower's footprint is also determined by the use of Islamic patterns. "To increase the buildings' cultural and regional identity further, the composition of the plan is designed using traditional Islamic geometric principles: two squares are rotated, superimposed and completed with small circular infills."[11] [figure 12]

The project is celebrated for its "sensitivity" to its context, its use of local materials and details, and its ability to create a very "Malaysian" building. In recounting the process of designing the building, Pelli describes an exchange between himself and the Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohammad:

MM: "It has to be Malaysian."
CP: "What does it mean?"
MM: "We don't know."

Claiming that there isn't much Malaysian architecture that is worth referring to ("A few huts and some British colonial buildings, which they don't really like")[12], Pelli turns to traditional Islamic forms of the rotated squares. Pelli performs the classic neo-colonial operation; surveying the terrain and seeing nothing (but huts), he effectively creates a cultural *tabula rasa*. Since the building

8 A press release issued about the construction of the Shanghai World Financial Center in Shanghai states that the building is meant to symbolize "the prosperity of the city of Shanghai and embody the hopes and lofty ideals of the people of China." Cited in Mitchel Pacelle, "U.S. Architects in Asia: Only Way to Go Is Up."

9 In a lecture on the Petronas Towers, Pelli gave a brief summary of the history of the skyscraper. Showing precedents, ranging from church spires to pagodas, from Iran, Tikal, India, and New York, Pelli describes what he feels to be an "urgent psychological need, across cultures, to build high." By claiming to find this "urgent psychological need" in all cultures, his projects are assured of being appropriately (and urgently) contextual. His projects are simply responding to that universal need. Cesar Pelli, comments made at a lecture at The Skyscraper Museum, New York.

10 Cesar Pelli, "The Petronas Towers," Reaching For the Skies, *Architectural Design Profile No. 116*, Maggie Toy ed., London, p. 63.

11 Cesar Pelli, "The Petronas Towers," p. 63.

12 Cesar Pelli, comments made at a lecture, November 6, 1997.

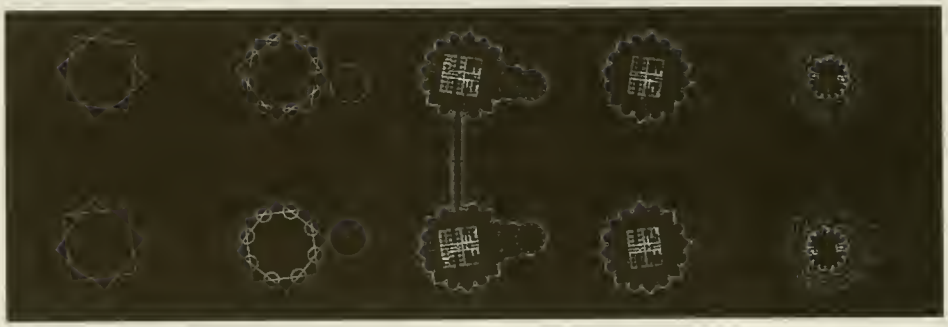


Figure 12.
Plan Diagrams of the Petronas Towers

"ha(d) to be Malaysian," he choses something in close proximity: Islamic patterns. Confronted with cultural otherness, Pelli creates a homogenizing formula: Malaysian equals Islamic.

Similar to the Petronas Towers, Skidmore Owings and Merrill's Jin Mao Tower, [figure 14] also draws from regional 'precedents' to derive its form. Made up of stepped back portions of a vertical shaft, the tower mimics a Chinese pagoda. Operating under similar conditions as Pelli, SOM, an American firm designing a building of physical and symbolic prominence in Asia, struggled to address the site's geographic, cultural and historical context.[13] Responding to criticism in the 1970s for their lack of sensitivity to context, SOM produces another eighty-eight story pagoda, a caricature of a traditional Chinese architectural form.[14]

The Grand 50 Office Building in Taipei, [figure 15] designed by C.Y. Lee and Partners, a large architecture firm in Taipei, is described as, "the first authentic Chinese skyscraper."[15] The massing of the building is articulated by cantilevered cornice projections and corner setbacks. This creates a stepped profile with a decorative crown, evocative of traditional Chinese architectural elements. The details of the curtain walls, lobbies, canopies and columns make direct references to Chinese wood construction details. Trabeated column capitals mimic interlocking "timber" elements.

Lee's self-stated goal is to "find a correct expression of Chinese culture in modern architecture'.[16] Lee's projects are modern looking buildings crowned by 'auspicious emblems': 'lucky cloud' floating roofs, circular portals, 'horseback' pediments, and lotus flower motifs. In Lee's words, "the quest for an authentic fusion of modern functional design with Chinese cultural traditions lies at the heart of the problem."[17]

Lee is different from Pelli and SOM, in that he is culturally Chinese and working in a Chinese context. Lee describes the function of a tall building as, "Tall element equals monument. And the purpose of a monument is to establish an identity, to express who you are and the total sum of your culture."[18] Heralded as "the architect for a new China," Lee's work is symptomatic of Chinese Postmodernism.[19] Desperate to counteract the internationalization of modern

13 "All of us were trying to reinvent ourselves," says Mr. McCarthy of Skidmore Owings, "In part," he adds, "our relief has been going to different places geographically and doing the same things we were doing in the 1980's." (my emphasis) Mitchell Pacelle, "U.S. Architects in Asia: Only way to Go is Up," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 21, 1996.

14 A survey of the buildings under construction in Shanghai, China's most cosmopolitan city since the before World War II, the only buildings that make reference to traditional Chinese forms are the ones being designed by foreign firms. The Oriental Pearl television tower, built in the early eighties, is a bulbous, rocket-like construct with no pretense to regional references.

15 The dilemma over what is 'authentically' Chinese recalls the post-revolutionary conundrum of which artifacts should be preserved and celebrated, and which artifacts should be denounced as vestiges of an imperial regime. A visit to the Forbidden City in Beijing underscores this dilemma. Can the history of China be delaminated from a Chinese imperial history? Similarly, can a modern building type be re-laminated with a history of Chinese architecture? "C.Y. Lee, An Architect for a New China," *World Architecture Profile*, Issue No. 54, p. 7.




Figure 13.
Petronas Towers in Kuala Lampur
Figure 14
Jin Mao Tower in Shanghai.
Figure 15.
Grand 50 Office Building, Taipei
Figure 16. Shanghai World Financial Center, Shanghai.

architecture, and to recapture a traditional past, forms which make references to historical structures or elements are deployed at the level of image. The tectonic of traditional Chinese craft is translated into an absurdly monumental symbol of "Chineseness"-- a counterfeit carpentry on the scale of a skyscraper. Lee's cultural mediation takes place on the level of caricature.

The use of architecture to embody national, cultural, or ethnic identities through static and pictorial representations is highly problematic. Equally problematic, though, is an architectural practice predicated on a regionalist position that assumes an identifiable local culture that is translatable into architectural form. The reduction of 'local' to 'image of the local' results in a proliferation of buildings that exhibit superficial cultural signs. These strategies succumb to the ready-made epithet and billboard identity.

Alan Colquhoun notes that "regionalism as a search for an authentic cultural and architectural essence was formulated precisely at the moment when the phenomena that it described seemed to be threatened and about to disappear."[20] The local is thought to be endangered, and therefore in need of protection. Similarly, in the absence of an applicable history, mythical pasts are resurrected. Ironically, these regionalist strategies create and maintain the separations that they are claiming to bridge. Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu and Wong Chong Thai write in their introduction to *Postcolonial Space(s)*, "An ethnographic interest in the non-West may expand the given boundaries of knowledge but does not transform it. While regionalist positions are critical of the conventional hierarchies that privilege the modern over the traditional and the international over the local, their interest lies more in finding a reconciliatory middle term than in questioning the very systems of privilege."[21] Regionalist strategies seek legitimation through simplistic cultural signifiers and freeze a culture in an "ethnographic presentness."[23]

The American practice, operating in Asian contexts and designing 'Asian-looking' buildings, fits a model of practice known as *orientalism.* Orientalism, a term coined by Edward Said, denotes the use of representations of the oriental subject to produce and maintain a power relation. The project of colonialism employed a pervasive strategy of orientalism, through which

16 "C.Y. Lee, An Architect for a New China," p. 8.

17 "C.Y. Lee, An Architect for a New China," p. 7.

18 "C.Y. Lee, An Architect for a New China," p. 10.

19 The term Postmodernism is widely used in different fields, with a wide range of meanings. In architectural discourses, Postmodernism commonly refers to a style that advocates a return to historical architectural vocabularies, but more specifically to classical forms such as pediments, cornice lines, entablatures, etc.

20 Alan Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism," p. 17.

21 Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu, Wong Chong Thai, *Postcolonial Space(s)*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1997 p. 8.

23 The term 'ethnographic presentness' is borrowed from James Clifford's book *The Predicament of Culture, Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art.* Also see Hal Foster, "The Artist As Ethnographer," in *The Return of the Real.*

the European 'self' was constructed in relation to the exotic native 'other'. As Said points out, the "Orient" and "Occident" are man-made. They are not simply 'out there' (nature), but meticulously constructed artifacts (culture). As socially constructed artifacts, the East and the West are made manifest in different forms of cultural representations: literature, painting, photography, cinema, and architecture. "Orientalism, therefore, is not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment."[24] Orientalism, as a discourse, proves useful as a means of understanding and dismantling oppressive cultural representations. Postcolonial theory contests these representations and constructs alternative ones. Architecture, as a medium of cultural identity, is implicated in the structures of representations that are highly charged ideologically.[25] Only through critical representations can we begin to contest the systems of signs that structure identities, individual as well as communal.

In making claims about cultural identity, architecture becomes invested with meanings that are not automatically legible. A comparison of two projects in Shanghai, the Shanghai World Financial Center (SWFC), designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox, and the Jin Mao tower, designed by Skidmore Owings and Merrill, illustrates this problem clearly. Although located on adjacent sites, the two projects employ very different strategies in regards to context. [figure 16] Unlike the Jin Mao tower, which makes explicit references to traditional Chinese architectural forms, the Shanghai World Financial Center employs formal abstractions that are not singularly coded.

The design of the SWFC is square in plan at the ground floor, tapering vertically along a slow curve that approximates a line which is the diagonal of the square. The top is punctured by a circular opening that not only relieves wind load, but also places the circle and the square in dialogue. In Chinese culture, the circle is seen as representing nature and the heavens. The square is symbolic of the man-made realm of 'earthliness'. The project relates to its context through "an abstract language which attempts to symbolically incorporate characteristics which are meaningful to the traditions of Chinese architecture," but not limited to its pictorial or image-based historical precedents.[26] The monolithic form makes a single gesture yet remains an open text, an empty signifier.[27]

24 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, p 6.

25 For Jameson, economic stages find their expression in cultural paradigms. Economics are generative of cultural phenomena, rather than being a cultural product itself. "Of all the arts, architecture is the closest constitutively to the economic, with which, in the form of commissions and land values, it has a virtually unmediated relationship." Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1993, p. 5

26 William Pedersen, in a project description, "Shanghai World Financial Center," *A+U*, Tokyo, 1996.

27 The tower is resolved at the top by an opening. It is literally empty- void, a circle, a platonic form. It is read simultaneously as a moongate, a rising sun, or as a mathematically abstract form.

The debate that surrounded the design and reception of the building reveals the arbitrary nature of a text and the importance of its reading. The SWFC was designed by an American-based firm for a Chinese site, and built by a Japanese developer. A member of the design review committee read the circular opening in the tower as a symbol, not of the heavens, but of the rising sun of the Japanese flag, and its presence on the SWFC as a re-inscription of Japanese imperialism in the center of Shanghai. This 'misreading' of the text forced the architects to partially obscure the purity of the circle. In a context of highly charged identity politics, and in a context informed by the historical violence of World War II, the building as text produced readings that were not anticipated by its authors. Whereas the SWFC was read as symbolically indeterminate to a dangerous degree, the Jin Mao Tower, in contrast, with its overt and elementary references, was read as appropriately and innocuously 'Chinese'.

A critical practice that produces cultural objects and complex critical readings sees identification as a process, and identity as other than a fixed and stable entity. A Postcolonial practice seeks to locate areas of "productive tensions produced by difference, not dismissed or dismantled by facile reconciliation."[28] As Homi Bhabha points out in his book *The Location of Culture*, identities are produced performatively. "What is theoretically innovative and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives or originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular and communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself."[29] For Bhabha, the process of identification is an act of negotiation and contestation.

Architectural discourse often takes as its occupant an idealized subject. Works of architecture are discussed in terms of assumed spatial experiences and static formal compositions. The 'viewer' is a universal and ahistorical figure, navigating space with mathematical detachment. Postcolonial discourse dislodges the subject from the constraining parameters of a purely formal practice. The subject of architecture is a gendered subject, a classed subject, and a racialized subject. The subject experiences architecture in a state of negotiation, and is constituted by the architecture even as he/she occupies its spaces.

At stake in the design and building of Asian cities is the possibility of architecture to create meaning, not on the level of symbolism, but in the complex field of practice, where identities are articulated and negotiated, and not dogmatically reiterated and reproduced.

28 Gulsum Baydar Nalbantoglu, Wong Chong Thai, *Postcolonial Space(s)*, p. 8.

29 Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, New York, 1994, p. 2.

* This text was started in November of 1997, when the Asian economic boom was in full swing. At that time the economic collapse of several Asian economies was beyond the horizon of foreseeable events. Since then, many of the projects described in this paper have been put on hold, or scrapped altogether.

Sustaining Tradition: Design for a contemporary Thai House in Northern Bangkok

bundit kanisthakhon

This thesis explores and documents the evolution of a Thai house, which has transformed drastically over the years to meet changes in social aspiration. The result of this investigation generated the design principles for a new single family house, which can be used as a prototype for future development in Thailand. The application and ensuing guidelines, which are responsive to the local climate, technology and culture, are presented as an alternative to current construction practice.

Fig.1 Conceptual Study

Fig.2 Floating Houses, From Paul Bonnetain, L'Extreme Orient, Paris, 1887

Bangkok

Because Bangkok is located on a flood plain with heavy monsoonal rain, the city was designed and built as a floating city next to the Chao Phraya river, connected by a series of canals. By the middle of the nineteenth century, more than half of the dwellings in Bangkok were afloat or amphibious.

Land based development began to appear in 1887, when the first public road was opened, followed by the introduction of trams in 1887 and the railway in 1890. Westernization took place in Bangkok in a rapid and undigested manner causing land based life-styles and technology to develop. As a result, Bangkok became two towns: the floating and the land based, badly sewn together and contradicting one another in cultures and functions. [1]

The Bangkok predicament is aptly expressed by Nietzsche: "Just as happened in the case of sea creatures who were forced to become land animals.... All of a sudden they found all their instincts devalued, unhinged. They must walk on legs and carry themselves, where before water had carried them: a terrible heaviness weighed upon them. They felt inept for the simplest manipulation, for in this new, unknown world they could no longer count on the guidance of their unconscious drive...." [2]

Architecturally, Bangkok has three main types of structures: floating, amphibious, and masonry. Floating houses are houses built on bamboo rafts. Amphibious architecture is built on stilts, scattered along the river and canal banks. Masonry structures, which are usually ceremonial places such as temples, are generally built on higher ground or on a solid podium.

1. Sumet Jumsai, *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific*, Chalermnit Press & DD Books, Bangkok, 1997. p.167.
2. Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Birth of Tragedy* and *The Genealogy of Morals*, Doubleday, New York, 1956, p.217

Building Types

The houses in Bangkok may be divided into three types, reflecting their construction techniques: Traditional, Conventional and Current.

Traditional

The traditional Thai house was built as a one story wooden structure on stilts. These houses had rectangular, high pitch roofs with extended overhangs and were placed on wooden platforms. The house could be a group of buildings for a big family or a single structure for a married couple. In addition, there were many practical factors that determined the characteristics of the house type.

The river and the canals were the primary route of transportation, and so people built their houses along these waterways. These houses were built on stilts to avoid floods and to protect the inhabitants from reptiles. When the land was dry, the space underneath the house could be used as a multi-purpose space, where family members worked, parked their boats and stored tools. It was also where livestock was sheltered.

Houses in a tropical climate must be designed to allow natural ventilation, with high pitch roofs to shed water quickly and extended overhangs to provide shading and protect the walls. In the past, wood was available locally and was used as the primary element in structure. Other materials such as bamboo and thatch were used for wall panels, which were fabricated and then attached to the house structure. House were often built in standard sizes using human proportion as a measuring tool, so the structural components could be assembled or dismantled quickly.

A single-family house usually consisted of more than one unit: a sleeping unit for the parents, another unit for children, a living unit and a cooking area. Although these units varied in size, they were built in the same basic form and were joined together by the verandah. The verandah aslo served as a multi-purpose space for shared activities.

Fig.3
Traditional Thai House.
From Ruthai Jaijongruk.
Ruan Thai Derm,
Bangkok,1996.

Fig.4
Traditional Thai House during flood

Fig.5
Temple of the Emerald Buddha

Fig.6
Conventional Development House

Fig 7
Current Development House

Conventional

Most single family houses in Bangkok today have a two story, concrete frame structure with brick infill. The construction materials and skill labor for this type of construction are easily found locally. These houses usually have two to three bedrooms, three bathrooms, servant room, living room, kitchen, dining room and sometimes an office and garage. These houses can be chosen from the real estate catalogs and can be built anywhere according to the owner's wishes.Most of these houses are located at the outskirts of Bangkok in the gated communities.

As these houses do not respond in any way to the region's climatic conditions, most people experience flooding problems every year during the rainy season. In addition, the masonry walls of these houses absorb the heat from the sun during the day and release it into the house at night, encouraging the use of air conditioning. Moreover, there are few shading devices over openings and the roof overhang is very small. These characteristics are suitable for a climate colder than that found in Thailand. The construction of these houses takes about eight months and future expansion can be done through ad hoc annexation.

Current

The current architectural development in Bangkok differs radically from conventional development in its construction materials and method. Instead of a concrete post and beam system, these houses are made of steel studs and insulation. As a result, the house must be fully air-conditioned at all times. Given the higher costs, these houses are aimed at the upper income bracket and can be completed in four months at anytime of the year.

Memory

Fig.8-Fig.12 The evolution of my own house from 1966-present.





we were all farmer....duriens, mangoes are the things that we grow.....

bathing? We did it in the Klong(canal)....washing? Still the klong....transportation?...the klong Food?...the klong....to play? the klong.
- grandmother

I built this house when your mom and I first got married....next to your grandmother's...seven of my friends came and helped me built....we did it in two months.... Your mom just got a job across the river, your grandpa took her to work by boat sometimes.
- dad

Your cousins moved in with us ...
we subdivided the big room into two bedrooms.

I started shopping at the supermarkets...there's always parking, not like the farmers market near our house.....
-mom

Since my sister got married, there are only 2 persons left in the house...my mom and my dad...and they keep asking me:
When are you coming HOME?

.....Where is my home?
Bangkok? Seattle? Mexico?
Boston?.....Khon Kaen?
-myself

For me, this search for fundamental design principles became a journey to my past, looking at the tranformation of my own house and its neighborhood over time. My quest was to discover a truth on which to base my analysis. To find a personal truth is to go back to one's own origins, to investigate why an opinion is held, to find out what is permanent. There are the results of my search ...

The house is located in Northern Bangkok, east of the Chao Phraya River. The surrounding neighborhood was once farmland and fruit orchards. My house was once farmland too, passed down from generation to generation for nearly 200 years. There is a canal, one of the many branches of the Chao Phraya River, next to the house. The neighborhood was once named after the canal, lime canal, because lime was the main farm product in this area. Today, the neighborhood is named Jaransanitwong 85, after Jaransanitwong road which cuts through the area.

Fig.13-Fig.14 The aerial photographs of my neighborhood in 1952 and1997. (Courtesy Royal Survey Department, Bangkok)

Principles

This analysis is to examine each individual space in the various Thai building types and call each space by its function. The building types include traditional, conventional, current and my own family house. These functional areas are then analyzed in terms of spiritual, climatic, social and architectural principles. A new category deals with derived principles that are used to guide the prototype design.

SITE	Spiritual Factors	Climatic Factors	Social Factors	Derived Principle
Getewey to the site	N/A	Provide shading for pedestriens through human scale vegetation	Discourege the use of automobile by hiding the cars from public view	Locate Vehicular Gateway where it is not clearly visible from the street. Locate Pededstrian Gateway so as to open onto the sidewalks for eesy access.
Building	Avoid Positioning the long side of the house facing West, which symbolizes death	Encourage naturel ventilation around building envelope; take advantage of prevailing S/SW wind. Reise to evoid flooding; Shade againet solar heat gain	Allow e transitional zone between the house and the gate for social interaction	Position length of structure in the North-South orientation; Lift up above ground; Set back from the Geteway. Use screens and fins to facilitate ventilation. Shede house with large roof, overheng to South.
Open Spece / lendscape	Certain trees heve euspicious qualities based on linguistic reasons	Provide sheding for the house	Piece human-scaled, fragrent plents neer entrance to provide a desirable place for social interection; elso work es property merkers	Plant trees at East and West end; Locate plants with raspect to their sizes and appearance; Piece potted plants, which can be removed during floods, near openings to deflect direct sunlight.
HOUSE				
House Gete	N/A	Provides shaded area	Where shoes are teken off before entering the house	Set back from the Site Gate; lifted above ground; smell eree to greet guests
Entrence	West is considered ineuspicious	Positioned to avoid solar glare	A piece to receive guests	Avoid location that points straight through the house buildings; never West to East
Cooking Aree	N/A	Positioned to encourage cross ventilation	Located neer entrence and children play eree for security	Always located at the periphery of the house with independent structure
Water Room	N/A	Act as heat berrier and to encourage cross ventilation	A private space, located away from the public eree, yet close to the circuletion	Located at either the East or West end of the house with bathing and toilet facilities
Weshing Area	N/A	Naturel ventiletion to dry leundry; protected from rain	Should be visually shielded from the public	Located at the West; covered but not enclosed
Sleeping Room	East is considered auspicious and symbolizes life, while West is inauspicious	Positioned to optimize cross-ventiletion and to avoid efternoon heat gain.	Considered to be the most private room in the house	Located at the East, Never toward the West
Bed Placement	Seme es above	Positioned to avoid heet gein	Entry should be fully visible from the head of the bed for comfort and security	Never piece the head of the bed toward the West
Guest Accepting Room	N/A	Positioned to catch prevailing wind from the S/SW	Where guests ere entertained; serves as multi-function room for the family	Shaded and located near Entrence
Eating Room	N/A	Positioned to avoid direct sunlight	Together with the Cooking Area, this is a piece where the family can interact	Locate away from the West with direct eccess to Cooking Area
Spiritual Shell/Alter	Upward side represents heeven, happiness, and superiority. West is considered inauspicious.	N/A	Should be e private and quiet space, separate from main circulation	Piece at the highest point and never facing the West
Water Container	N/A	Made to gather rainwater and to act as heet barrier	N/A	Locate on the roof, or on the highest point of the house
Multi-purpose Aree	A spece located beneath another spece is considered ineuspicious	Sheded by the house	Shielded from the public	Piece beneath the house, where weshing area, garage, gathering space, storage, and additional rooms can be located

Approaches

Two sites were selected to encompass the two possible building orientations. One is East-West facing and the other is North- South facing. The locations selected are situated in my neighborhood, where a canal has been paved over and used as a road. The programs of these prototype houses include: a cooking area, an eating area, a guest accepting area, a home office, two water rooms, two bedrooms, a washing area and a multipurpose area.

New Design Principles: Three Elements House

The house is broken down into three elements: Ground, Middle, Roof. These three elements are conceived and designed to allow possible future vertical and horizontal expansion. These elements are connected and related to each other, yet they still follow their individual building and spatial logic.

Ground

This ground zone should be left as open as possible to allow for maximum ventilation and to avoid damages from the continued flood problems in Bangkok. Instead of housing animals, this area can serve a new purpose, such as parking, to address modern needs.

Middle

The middle zone of the house is where the majority of the living spaces are. In this zone, the interior and exterior partitions can be placed according

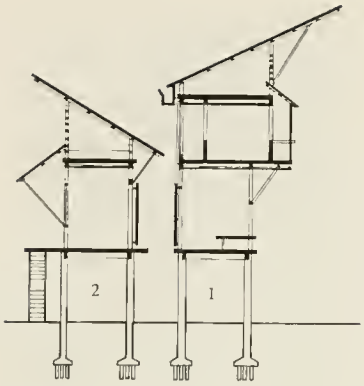


Fig. 15
Prototype Design I -section

1 Multipurpose Area
2 Parking
3 Entrance
4 Guest receiving Area
5 Guest accepting Area
6 Eating Area
7 Cooking Area
8 Washing Area
9 Water Room
10 Office
11 Water Room
12,13 Sleeping Room
14 Water container area

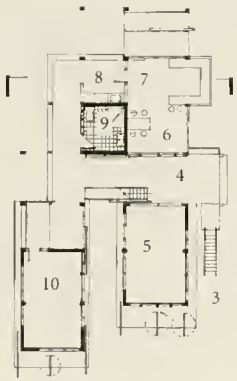


Fig. 16
Prototype Design I -First floor

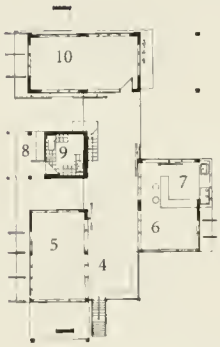


Fig. 18
Prototype Design II -First floor plan

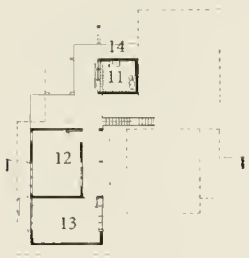


Fig. 17
Prototype Design I -second floor plan

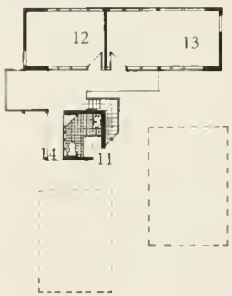


Fig. 19
Prototype Design II - Second floor plan

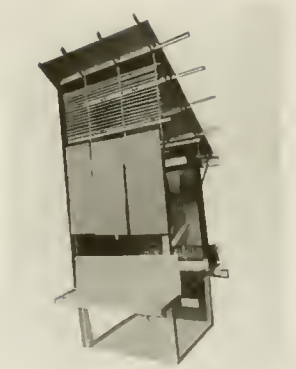
to the owner's wish for privacy and sun protection. These partitions are designed to the maximum size that can be carried by four people into the house without the use of heavy machinery. This is a very important consideration because many of the residential streets in Bangkok are still narrow and cannot accommodate large trucks. This zone is designed with openings that exploit natural ventilation, but given the almost non-existent breeze in Bangkok's current urban environment, the entire level can also be enclosed to accommodate an air conditioning system.

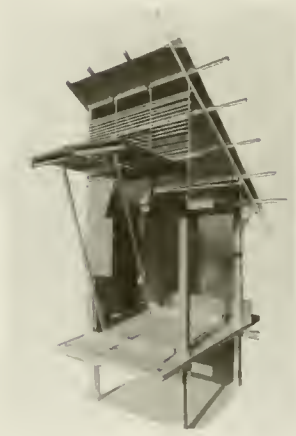
Roof

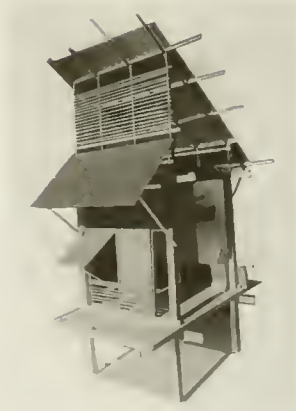
The roof is designed like a cap that can be easily moved up for usable space. This new and flexible feature of roof structure is a direct response to Bangkok's dwindling open space and the resultant high land prices. A one-story house can be expanded vertically by raising the roof to create a second dwelling level. The area under the roof, being the hottest area of the house, should be left open to allow for maximum ventilation. In addition, abundant sunlight creates possibilities for the installation of photo voltaic panels on the roof structure.

Landscape

Trees are planted near the east and west facades to provide additional shading and to increase privacy. Planting trees near the house also puts the dweller in touch with nature and its seasonal changes. In addition, potted plants, which can be removed during floods, should be placed near openings to deflect direct sunlight.







Water System

Traditionally, water jars are placed outside the house to collect rain water for dwellers to wash in year-round. Based on this same principle, rainwater containers, supplementing the city's water supply, are integrated with the core structure the house. The re-introduction of rain water usage involves a gravity-driven collection system that begins at the roof gutters, flows down to the open-air bathroom on the second level, down to the enclosed bathroom in the middle zone, and all the way down to the ground level. This system helps supply water for all functions in the house. Extra water for future use is stored in containers outside the house.

left
Fig. 20-Fig 22
North Facade Study - Scheme showing how sun shading device on the north and south facade should be designed and operated. Unlike the vertical fins and the sliding doors on the east and west facade (Fig.28-Fig.29 next page), panels that can be extended forward and up are encouraged here because of the higher sun angles. If the critical sun angles are known, fixed panel can also be used.

right
Fig 23 Preliminary Scheme IV
Fig 24 Preliminary Scheme V
Fig. 25 Preliminary SchemeVI
(prototype Design II)
Fig 26.Vertical Components
Fig. 27 Horizontal Components

Fig. 28

Fig. 29

Fig. 30 Interior Space facing west with double sliding doors.

and it continues.....

A starting point and catalyst for the design methodology employed in this thesis were my own experiences and memories. This helped me to make decisions about what is worth keeping or sustaining. I arrived at the decisions by examining the house that I grew up in, by relying on my childhood memories and by learning about tradition from my parents and my grandparents. My design process was informed by my own personal understanding of each and every space in my family house and its surrounding landscape. Given the manageable scale of this project, a house based on these principles can readily be built in Bangkok today.

I hope my thesis will remind fellow designers to sustain their memories of the space/places that they have experienced and to utilize them as an anchor and a guide in their own design process.

Archipelago Aesthetics: The Evidence of architecture in Southeast Asia

stephen cairns

"Town of Kenowit, Rejang River', 1849.
From *The Living House* by Roxanne Waterson

I

For traditional philosophy a well-grounded piece of architecture is a source of delight and comfort; from this basis speculations on the very limits of thinking can safely unfold. This is to say that philosophy is metaphorically reliant on architecture. The most famous example of this is perhaps Kant's critical philosophy where the very form of his thinking is described in architectural terms. Literary critic J. Hillis Miller, like many others in recent years, is suspicious of the comfort a well-grounded piece of architecture offers. He argues that in philosophy geographical terms such as 'ground', and architectural terms such as 'architectonic' have had their 'original spatial and material reference [...] eroded as they have been turned into conceptual terms' thereby becoming 'subordinated to logical and rational thinking'. As a consequence such terms tend to operate unproblematically as 'transparent illustrative metaphors, handy ways of thinking'. Miller argues that this erosion serves a kind of paradoxical 'triumph of theory'. The 'triumph of theory' he argues is 'the covering over of that problem' of the distinction between material base and superstructure, it is the 'erasure or forgetting of the material base in question'. Miller goes on to describe his project, in his recent book *Topographies*, as exploring the workings in literary and philosophical texts of such terms as 'river, stream, mountain, house, path, field, hedge, road, bridge, shore, doorway, cemetery, tombstone, crypt, tumulus, boundary, horizon'. He asks whether such geographical or architectural terms 'have a function beyond that of mere setting or metaphorical adornment'.

Conversely, Miller does not aim to offer up contingencies as a simple circumvention of formal difficulties with representation; he does not suggest, in other words, that a return to 'the material' — as figured in various geographical or architectural terminologies — would operate as a bulwark against a supposed rampant textuality. The materiality Miller has in mind remains mediated by language. It stands 'for what can never be approached, named, perceived, felt, thought, or in any way encountered as such', that nonetheless 'is the hidden agent of all those phenomenal experiences'. 'Materiality' in this sense invokes a desired material world without ever offering an unmediated encounter with it. Nonetheless 'materiality' represents an interruption of the cognitive workings of meaning and hence should be privileged as triggering moments of (im)possible contact, or at least unease, between world and text. Each topography encountered in the literary and philosophical texts Miller chooses to read, in different ways 'hide an unplaceable place', and invokes the dilemma of materiality. The triumph of theory — as the blithe erasure of the material — for Miller is a triumph

of thinking over reading. So a resistance to theory, he argues, must be enacted through a heightened reading practice, a practice he calls an 'ethics of reading'. Such a practice pays close attention to the workings of the material in the phenomenal experience of reading. So, terms such as 'river', 'stream', 'mountain', 'house', 'path', 'doorway', 'boundary' etc. are important for their orchestration of a unique referential circumstance in the act of reading itself. In paying close attention to the materiality of the text through this rigorous reading as 'a unique performative event', Miller aims to draw attention to moments which remain just out of reach of cognition. Architecture and geography are key points at which the workings of theory might be interrupted. Architecture and geography are privileged zones of contingency in the transcendental space of theory.

Miller's position is not unproblematic from our disciplinary point of view. His privileging of the activity of reading, however broad he imagines it to be, is inadequate when dealing with geographical or architectural phenomena — to say that a landscape or a built form might be 'read' is excessively metaphorical. But I want to by-pass this dilemma here in order to explore the dynamic between geography, architecture and theory itself in more detail. What I am interested in is the way such a relationship plays itself out in situations in which each of its components are strange. The situations I have in mind are certain European engagements with the islands of the Southeast Asian archipelago. This exploration aims, then, to transport Miller's interest in the convolution of materiality and phenomenality into a zone where the ground itself is not so obvious a category, and where the reading of order is a consistently troubling activity.

I'll begin this exploration with a reading of the geography.

II

In its Southeast corner, the stable land mass of continental Asia seems to break open. From the gentle moment at which Sumatra eases away from the underside of the Malay Peninsula, the geography spills Eastwards in a sequence of intensifying vortices and eddies intermingling land and sea in ever more complex relations. At first substantial and densely afforested island chunks hold in tangential formations and string out along the equator. Later these chunks themselves twist, contort and fragment into smaller particles. Eventually they froth and foam becoming almost gaseous in consistency and, beholden to no axial order, are flung pollen-like into the giant bowl of the Pacific. In a relatively short space the old continental mass of mainland Asia is transformed into the fresh ethereal space of the Pacific. Between the two extremes of this geography the archipelago forms an extended liminal zone, a snap-shot of a geomorphological explosion in which the island-fragments are held at a simmer, not quite boiling over. In this zone neither land nor sea dominates, instead island-figure and oceanic-'ground' continuously interchange so that a formal agitation confronts the cartographer's eye. Indeed, scan any pre-1960s atlas and this difficulty is graphically confirmed: whereas mainland Asia and the Pacific are represented as coherent entities each with its own formal legibility — terrestrial mass and oceanic bowl respectively — the extended point of inflection between them is difficult to see. 'Asia' and 'the Pacific' are usually represented coherently in the atlas format, as are entities such as 'the Far East' or 'Indo-China'. But insular Southeast Asia is most often found straddling maps on different pages, its agitated island clusters usually cropped and located on the margins of those more coherent geographical entities.

In the West, insular Southeast

Asia had long been known by such names as 'Further India' or the 'East Indies', and was thereby conceived as a kind of Hindu colony under the direct control of kingdoms in India. But during the Dutch colonial era a substantial body of evidence pointing to unique historical and cultural characteristics of the archipelago was gradually accumulated. Consequently by the 1940s the older terminology had come to be seen as imprecise and outmoded. The term 'Southeast Asia' came into general use around this time, and it articulated a unique regional identity, historically implicated in cultural and economic relations with India, but distinct from India and consequently fully reciprocal in those relations. However, once the association with the clear and long-established civilizational traits of India was broken, the characteristics of this regional identity were required to be thought anew. This process proved to be a fraught one. In a perceptive essay on Indonesian historiography for instance, Tony Day notes that 'Southeast Asian history produces [...] a kind of anxiety in those who study it'. Indeed, across a whole range of disciplines — whether it be sociology, anthropology, geography, cultural history or archaeology — Western engagements with the region from this time are beset by epistemological anxieties. Such anxieties are persistent because this engagement attempts to produce an autonomous disciplinary object in the face of it, a region, as Day goes on to describe it, which 'in so many historical and commonsensical ways [...] is not and has never been "autonomous"'. This production of autonomy in the face of a lack of autonomy, although developed in various discipline-specific terms, was articulated initially and most obviously through long and convoluted attempts to 'identify the region of study'. And this, in turn, was most often expressed through worries about the fracturous geography of the region. So, at the risk of sounding like an enviro-determinist, I want to invite you to imagine (provisionally at least) that the pseudo-geomorphological and formal agitations we can read off an atlas map somehow infect the various scholarly engagements made with the region; as if that fragmented geographical image serves as an index of the difficulties the disciplines have in their engagements with insular Southeast Asia.

III

Architecture's place in this broadly cross-disciplinary anxiety is particularly interesting for two inter-related reasons: first, architecture rarely figures as an explicit disciplinary formation, and yet (and this is the second reason) architectural issues, themes and tropes surface in many of the other disciplinary debates. Architecture is impossible to place, and yet is thoroughly implicated in the articulation of a regional cultural identity. Of course, architecture could be said to be a key source of evidence in the production of cultural identity more generally. For instance many of anthropology's great ethnographers — Lafitau in North America, Malinowski in the Trobriands, Lévi-Strauss in South America, Radcliffe-Browne in the Andaman Islands — feature descriptions of built form at pivotal locations in their monographs, and, furthermore, the structuring of ethnographic evidence, as unique cultural wholes, are often developed around such descriptions. Architecture, then, could be understood as a keystone which holds together a vast array of traits, practices, behaviours and artefacts such that they are able to coalesce as an organic cultural form (or, more broadly, as theory). But in an environment, such as insular Southeast Asia, which resists formalization through its own lack of form architecture takes on an even greater burden in the proof and production of cultural identity. In other words, the already sanctioned relationship between architecture and

anthropology in general is heightened in this part of the world; architecture is interpolated into the field of anthropological culture in a more urgent and thorough way here. Two recent examples of this intensified relationship come to mind: first, Roxana Waterson's book *The Living House: An anthropology of architecture in Southeast Asia* is perhaps the best known recent anthropology of Southeast Asia. And she develops an anthropological account of cultural diversity in the archipelago through an explicit consideration of indigenous built form. The second example is Janet Carsten and Stephen Hugh-Jones' book *About the house: Lévi-Strauss and beyond.* This is a general text on anthropological interpretations of built form, yet it relies overwhelmingly on built form case-studies from the archipelago — over half of the essays in the book (six of ten) deal explicitly with built forms in the Southeast Asian archipelago. So if the geography of the region can be understood as the fracturous grounds — literally and figuratively — on which the project of cultural identification unfolded, then the most powerful form of evidence wielded within it was architectural in character. Architecture and geography are brought into a particularly complex relation here, and together they are implicated in the discursive production of an indigenous culture. So to develop the imagined hypothesis a little further would be to add that, if a fractured geography effects a comprehensive epistemological anxiety, then architecture is required as a fundamental cultural surrogate to pull things together again.

IV

But a consideration of the indigenous architecture of the region from outside anthropology's frame raises the possibility that architecture and geography play into theory's hands all too willingly. It is as if architecture and geography are all too ready to collude, to have their 'original spatial and material reference [...] eroded', to be 'turned into conceptual terms', to serve as 'transparent illustrative metaphors, handy ways of thinking' about culture. The eighteenth century English traveller Captain John Davis notes that indigenous settlements in Aceh, Northern Sumatra — often the first Southeast Asian 'city' Western travellers encountered — were

> "very spacious, built in a Wood, so that we could not see a house till we were upon it. Neither could we go into any place, but we found houses and great concourse of people: so that I think the town spreadeth over the whole land".

A French Jesuit, S. J. de Premare writing to a colleague in Canton, in 1699, makes the following remarks on the same 'city':

> "[i]magine a forest of coconut trees, bamboos, pineapples and bananas, through the midst of which passes quite a beautiful river all covered with boats; put in this forest an incredible number of houses made of canes, reeds and bark, and arrange them in such a manner that they sometimes form streets, sometimes separate quarters; divide these various quarters by meadows and woods: spread throughout this forest as many people as you see in your towns, when they are well populated; you will form a pretty accurate idea of Achen [Aceh] and you will agree that a city of this new style can give pleasure to passing strangers [...]. Everything is neglected and natural, rustic and even a little wild. When one is at anchor one sees not a single vestige or appearance of a city, because the great trees along the shore hide all its houses".

The 'wild' spatiality of this Indonesian 'urbanism' is also attested to by John Crawfurd in the nineteenth century: 'a town, even when it consists of many thousand inhabitants, is no more than an aggregate of villages'. As Anthony Reid notes, in his essay 'The structure of cities in Southeast Asia', these impressions are made despite the fact that the urban conglomerations of

Southeast Asia were amongst the largest in the world during the seventeenth century. He concludes that '[i]n approaching the Southeast Asian city we may be wise to shed most of our preconceptions about how a Renaissance city ought to function'.

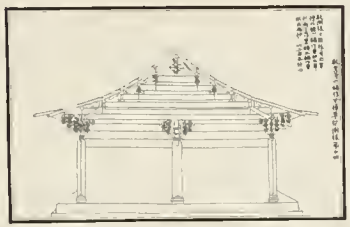
Reid offers an economic explanation for this kind of rural 'urbanism': 'manpower, not fixed capital, was regarded as the principal asset which had to be protected in the Southeast Asian city', as a consequence, he argues, '[t]here was little sense of a specific area which had to be defended against all enemies, and no sense at all that the city was a different world from the suburbs and the countryside'. As a consequence fixed dwellings and land ownership were not regarded as high priorities. 'Except in the biggest cities life was based on the presumption of constant mobility'.

This ambivalence with regard to territory is also noted, from a sociological perspective, by Jan Berman. Discussing the nineteenth century administrative structures of the villages of Banten and Priangan, West Java, Berman points out that '[t]here was no mention of the village as a territorial organization at the time of the [Vereenigde Oost-Indische] Compagnie and, as late as 1857, the Resident explained that there were no desa [village] heads'. Villages were known rather as 'scattered settlements', and their social organization relied on principles of social mobility and elasticity. Like Reid, Berman concludes that '[o]n reading the old reports, one gets rather the impression that the Javanese countryside was in a permanent state of flux'. Berman argues that the institution of a standard village form — which entailed an administrative structure, clearly delineated village boundaries, and the fixing of finite bodies of population to specified places of residence — was a consequence of the implementation of the colonial policy of the Cultuurstelsel. This policy led to the comprehensive surveying of the whole of Java, and the allocation of all uncultivated land to the colonial state.

V

The grounds which were settled (geography) and the modes of settlement (architecture) are locked into an intriguing relationship here: they collude to generate a wild and unsettled urbanism. The values of civilization privilege permanence, sedentariness and form, and these values underpin the production of cultural diversity in the region. Consequently the ephemeral urbanism which emerges in the archipelago can never offer evidence of coherence, it can never support the values dear to the discourse of civilization.

This discourse was initiated in the colonial era and continued in many contemporary engagements with the region. If the epistemological anxiety which besets such engagements is to be productive in the postcolonial era, it must be turned to thinking at the limits of form and beyond comfortable autonomies. This would be to take seriously the possibilities of an ephemeral architecture and a wild urbanism. Both of these are inherently contradictory terms: architecture by definition is a resistance of ephemera, and urbanism is only ever 'wild' in a romantic sense. However, these terms are symptomatic of the kinds of convoluted and contradictory demands certain postcolonial conditions make of Western scholarship. In these circumstances, architecture can make the most of its privileged position between the material and the phenomenal if it is prepared to resist its allocated role in the triumph of theory.



Introduction

I am currently writing a shape grammar of the structural carpentry system (*da muzuo zhidu*) of the 12th-century Chinese government building manual, *Yingzao fashi* (Building standards). The parts of the *Yingzao fashi* that deal with structural carpentry can be considered a process description of the official wood frame style of the Song dynasty (960–1127). The shape grammar tries to characterize this process formally.

According to the *Yingzao fashi*, there are two main structural types: *dian* hall and *ting* hall (figs. 1–2). In *dian* halls, the columns simply support the roof structure, reaching no higher than the lowest beams. The two parts – columns and roof structure – are so independent that one could simply lift the whole roof structure off the columns. In *ting* halls, on the other hand, the columns reach into and are part of the roof structure. The complete frame of the *ting* hall is composed of repeated frames perpendicular to the front elevation. Each of these transverse frames (*liangjia*) is composed in turn of columns and transverse beams. This article is concerned with the composition of transverse frames in *ting* halls.

At this point, it is well to remember that unlike western buildings, in which the rafters support the purlins, in Chinese buildings the purlins support the rafters. These rafters are segmented and make possible the characteristic curved section. A rafter is not more than about six feet long in horizontal projection, and is used as a unit of length for beams and of depth for buildings. Hence, we speak of three-rafter beams or four-rafter buildings. Columns can be located at the ends of rafters, so in a six-rafter building, for example, there are seven possible positions for columns.

What configurations of columns and beams among these seven positions are permitted? The *Yingzao fashi* includes drawings of 18 different transverse frames (figs. 2–17), without explaining whether they comprise all permissible configurations or are only part of a larger group. Should the grammar generate these 18 only, or are there more?

There is a clue: the 18 variations have brief, even telegraphic, descriptions. If we understand how these descriptions are related to the grammar, we will be able to use this knowledge in writing the grammar. Stiny (1981) formalizes this relation and shows in particular that the functions which generate descriptions are associated with shape rules. Thus, we propose functions to generate the descriptions and thereby propose the structure of the shape grammar.

The descriptions in the *Yingzao fashi*

Each description has three parts (figs. 2–17), each characterizing one aspect of the transverse frame.

1 **Depth**, in rafters. This is an even number.

2 **Subdivision**, expressed in various combinations of three types of terms.

- a Clear span (*tong yan*). In a clear span building, there are no interior columns, only the two in the front and back walls (fig. 17a).
- b Central division (*fen xin*). In a centrally divided building, there is a column below the ridge purlin (fig. 16b).
- c Beams (*fu*). The length of the beam indicates the size of the bay it spans. Only the outermost beams are specified; the inner beams are merely implied (17b).

Of the 18 descriptions, none containing the term *clear span* also contain the terms *central division* or *beams*. A description not containing *clear span* contains *central division* or *beams* or both (figs. 7, 9, 11).

3 **Total number of columns**. The minimum is two in a clear span building. The maximum is one more than the number of rafters, but this possibility is not seen among the 18 variations.

Consider the description (fig. 4):

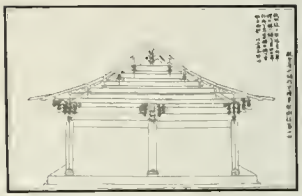
> 10-rafter building, centrally divided, a 2-rafter beam in both front and back, with 5 columns (*shijia chuan wu, fen xin, qianhou ru fu, yong wu zhu*).

The building has four bays which, from front to back, are two, three, three and two rafters deep. The two outside bays are specified; the two inside bays are not.

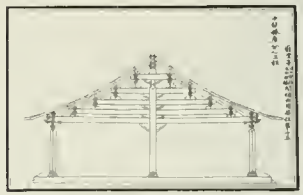
How descriptions and shape grammars are related

Now that we have seen what the descriptions look like, let us discuss, briefly and in a minimally technical way, the formal relation of descriptions and grammar. For details, see Stiny (1981).

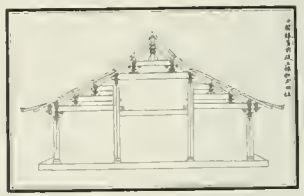
A grammar consists of an initial shape and a number of shape rules. The shape rules are applied to shapes to produce other shapes. There is an initial description associated with the initial shape and functions associated with the shape rules. As each shape rule is applied to one shape to produce another shape, the associated function is applied to the description of the one shape to produce a description of the other shape. It does this by changing some of the components of the description. Thus, "given a language of designs defined by a shape grammar, the intended descriptions of these designs can be explicitly constructed by use of a recursive schema based on this shape grammar" (Stiny 1981, 257).



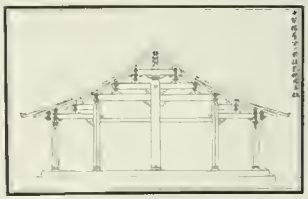
1 10-rafter *dian* hall.



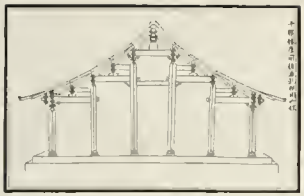
2 10-rafter building, centrally divided, with 3 columns (*shijia chuan wu, fen xin, yong san zhu*)



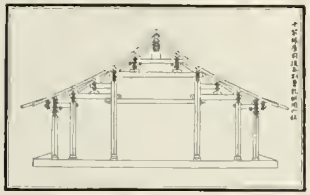
3 10-rafter building, a 3-rafter beam in both front and back, with 4 columns (*shijia chuan wu, qianhou sanchuan fu, yong si zhu*)



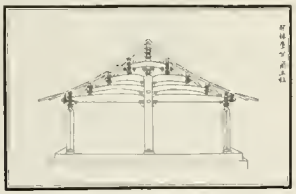
4 10-rafter building, centrally divided, a 2-rafter beam in both front and back, with 5 columns (*shijia chuan wu, fen xin, qianhou ru fu, yong wu zhu*)



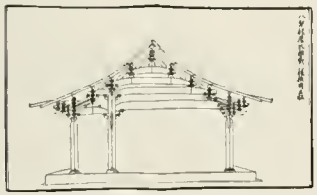
5 10-rafter building, two 2-rafter beams in both front and back, with 6 columns (*shijia chuan wu, qianhou bing ru fu, yong liu zhu*)



6 10-rafter building, a 1-rafter beam and a 2-rafter beam in both front and back, with 6 columns (*shijia chuan wu, qianhou ge zha qian ru fu, yong liu zhu*)



7 8-rafter building, centrally divided, with 3 columns (*bajia chuan wu, fen xin, yong san zhu*)



8 8-rafter building, a 2-rafter beam abutting a 6-rafter beam, with 3 columns (*bajia chuan wu, ru fu dui liuchuan fu, yong san zhu*)

We take this relation between descriptions and functions, and work backwards, as it were. We start from designs and descriptions, propose functions that explicitly generate the descriptions, and, by implication, propose certain aspects of the shape rules that generate the designs.

Constructing the descriptions in the *Yingzao fashi*

Let us return to the descriptions in the *Yingzao fashi*, each of which, as we have seen, has three components: depth (the number r of rafters), subdivision, and number c of columns. Each description has the form # α_1 # α_2 # α_3 #, where # separates the components. We now propose to show the derivations of descriptions of a four-rafter building (*sijia chuan wu*). The initial shape is a 4-rafter building with 2 columns; the corresponding initial description is:

4-rafter building # e # with 2 columns

The second component is empty – shown by e – because the description *clear span* should be assigned actively by a function. If *clear span* were part of the initial description, it would be a default, and no function would be required to produce the description.

The functions g_1 through g_8 are given below. Only those components that are changed are shown. The component α_1 is unchanged by all functions, but it is retained because it is in the written description and because it is needed to control the application of functions. For instance, it prevents functions from specifying more beams than there is room for.

The function g_1 leaves the component α_3 unchanged. It changes the component α_2 to *clear span.*

g_1: α_2 ← clear span

The function g_2 changes the component α_2 to *centrally divided* and increases the number c of columns by 1.

g_2: α_2 ← centrally divided
$\alpha 3$ ← with c + 1 columns

The functions g_3–g_8 add *n-rafter beam* to the component α_2 and increase the number c of columns by 1.

g_3: α_2 ← α_2, 1-rafter beam in front
α_3 ← with c + 1 columns

g_4: α_2 ← α_2, 2-rafter beam in front
α_3 ← with c + 1 columns

g_5: α_2 ← α_2, 3-rafter beam in front
α_3 ← with c + 1 columns

g_6: α_2 ← α_2, 1-rafter beam in back

$\alpha_3 \leftarrow$ with $c + 1$ columns

g_7: $\alpha_2 \leftarrow \alpha_2$, 2-rafter beam in back

$\alpha_3 \leftarrow$ with $c + 1$ columns

g_8: $\alpha_2 \leftarrow \alpha_2$, 3-rafter beam in back

$\alpha_3 \leftarrow$ with $c + 1$ columns

How do these functions generate descriptions? As examples, seven descriptions of a four-rafter building are derived here. Four are among the 18 in the text (derivations 1, 2, 4, and 5, corresponding to figs. 17a, 16b, 17b, and 16a); three are not (derivations 3, 6, and 7), although one (derivation 7) corresponds to a reflection of one among the 18 in the text (fig. 16a). Other descriptions can be generated by the functions but, compared to the set of 18, they appear ill-formed. They are worth discussing, but we omit them here for lack of space.

(1) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #

⇓ g_1

4-rafter building # clear span # with 2 columns

(2) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #

⇓ g_2

4-rafter building # centrally divided # with 3 columns

(3) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #

⇓ g_2

4-rafter building # centrally divided # with 3 columns

⇓ g_3

4-rafter building # centrally divided, 1-rafter beam in front # with 4 columns

⇓ g_6

4-rafter building # centrally divided, 1-rafter beam in front, 1-rafter beam in back # with 5 columns

(4) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #

⇓ g_3

4-rafter building # 1-rafter beam in front # with 3 columns

⇓ g_6

4-rafter building # 1-rafter beam in front, 1-rafter beam in back # with 4 columns

(5) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #

⇓ g_3

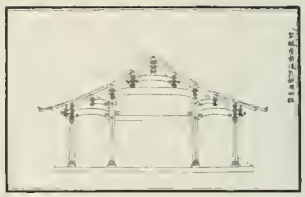
4-rafter building # 1-rafter beam in front # with 3 columns

⇓ g_6

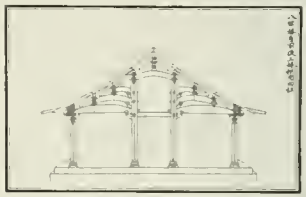
4-rafter building # 1-rafter beam in front, 3-rafter beam in back # with 4 columns

(6) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #

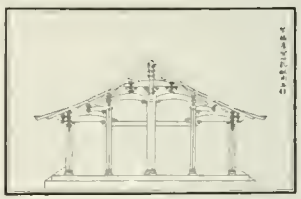
⇓ g_4



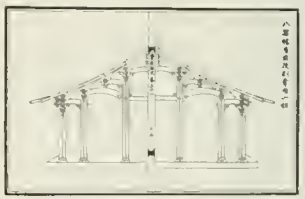
9 8-rafter building, a 2-rafter beam in both front and back, with 4 columns (*bajia chuan wu, qianhou ru fu, yong si zhu*)



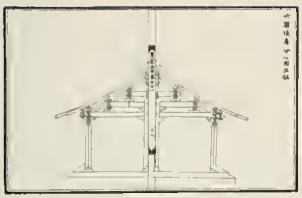
10 8-rafter building, a 3-rafter beam in both front and back, with 4 columns (*bajia chuan wu, qianhou sanchuan fu, yong si zhu*)



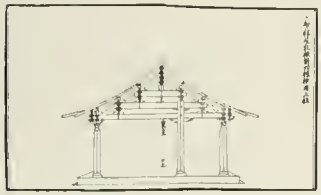
11 8-rafter building, centrally divided, a 2-rafter beam [in both front and back], with 5 columns (*bajia chuan wu, fen xin, [qianhou] ru fu, yong wu zhu*)



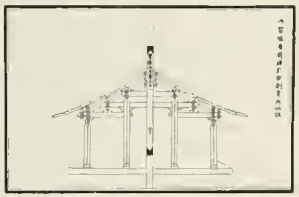
12 8-rafter building, a 1-rafter beam and a 2-rafter beam in both front and back, with 6 columns (*bajia chuan wu, qianhou zha qian ru fu, yong liu zhu*)



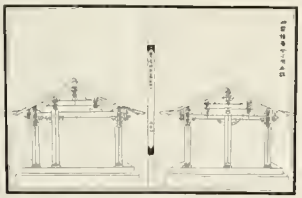
13 6-rafter building, centrally divided, with 3 columns (*liujia chuan wu, fen xin, yong san zhu*)



14 6-rafter building, a 2-rafter beam abutting a 4-rafter beam, with 3 columns (*liujia chuan wu, ru fu dui sichuan fu, yong san zhu*)



15 6-rafter building, a 2-rafter beam in front and a 1-rafter beam in back, with 4 columns (*liujia chuan wu, qian ru fu hou zha qian, yong si zhu*). The drawing is of a 6-rafter building, a 2-rafter beam in front and back, with 4 columns (*liujia chuan wu, qian-hou ru fu hou, yong si zhu*).



16a 4-rafter building, a 1-rafter beam abutting a 3-rafter beam, with 3 columns (*sijia chuan wu, zha qian dui sanchuan fu, yong san zhu*)
16b 4-rafter building, centrally divided, with 3 columns (*sijia chuan wu, fen xin, yong san zhu*)

4-rafter building # 2-rafter beam in front # with 3 columns
$\Downarrow g_7$
4-rafter building # 2-rafter beam in front, 2-rafter beam in back # with 4 columns

(7) # 4-rafter building # *e* # with 2 columns #
$\Downarrow g_5$
4-rafter building # 3-rafter beam in front # with 3 columns
$\Downarrow g_8$
4-rafter building # 3-rafter beam in front, 1-rafter beam in back # with 4 columns

Even this small exercise raises many questions. Take, for example, the functions g_3–g_8. Would a single function for all lengths and positions of beams be more appropriate? How can the application of functions be controlled so that they do not generate a description of, say, two three-rafter beams in a four-rafter building? How can the initial shape be generalized to accommodate buildings of different depths?

These questions are largely about characterizing the interaction of the functions. This in turn is actually a matter of characterizing the interaction of the shape rules with which the functions are associated. That is, to constrain a function, we must constrain its corresponding shape rule. Thus, to answer these questions the shape grammar must be written.

Consequences for the shape grammar

These questions help determine important features of the shape grammar, even before it has been written. To propose functions that generate the descriptions is implicitly to propose shape rules. A number of features of the shape grammar can already be identified.

First, there should be a shape rule associated with the function g_1. This shape rule would leave the design unchanged, but it would allow the description to be changed to *clear span* only by applying the function g_1, not by leaving a initial description unchanged as a default. It should be constrained so that it can be applied only to the initial shape and that no other function can change the resulting description.

Second, there should be a shape rule that inserts a single column below the ridge purlin and that is associated with the function g_2. It should be constrained so that it can be applied only to the initial shape and can be followed optionally by shape rules instantiating beams.

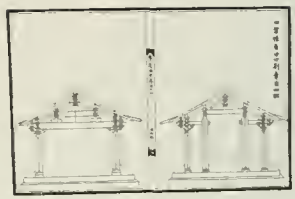
Third, there should be separate rules for central division and subdivision of beams. This allows for transverse frames with a central division, with subdivided beams, or with both (derivations 2, 4, and 3).

Fourth, the shape rules should subdivide beams from the outside in. This follows from the descriptions, which specify explicitly only the outer beams, not the inner ones (derivation 4).

Fifth, the designs and their descriptions should have a one–one relation. If they had a many–one relation, then configurations differently generated but otherwise identical would have different descriptions. Such synonymous descriptions seem not to be permitted; compare these two descriptions (from derivations 2 and 6):

> four-rafter building, centrally divided, with three columns;
> four-rafter building, a two-rafter beam in both front and back, with three columns.

If the designs and their descriptions had a one–many relation, then some designs would not have descriptions. This would seem to make descriptions unnecessary. Another hint is that the 18 variations and their descriptions have a one–one relation.



17a 4-rafter building, clear span, with 2 columns (*sijia chuan wu, tong yan, yong er zhu*)
17b 4-rafter building, a 1-rafter beam in both front and back, with 4 columns (*sijia chuan wu, qianhou zha qian, yong si zhu*)

Conclusion

We now have the outline of a shape grammar that generates the 18 transverse frames illustrated in the *Yingzao fashi*. This outline is implied by the functions we propose to generate the descriptions accompanying the illustrations. Specifically, we associate a step in the generation of a transverse frame with a step in the generation of its description. For example, the grammar should have a shape rule that "centrally divides" a transverse frame; when this rule is applied, an associated function changes the associated description to include *centrally divided.*

Using descriptions provides an alternative approach to the question of which transverse frames are allowed: we can now evaluate not only the design itself but also its description. The grammar now embodies those criteria that interested the builders of the Song dynasty; to some extent it has the internal logic, the "look and feel," of the *Yingzao fashi*. This in turn addresses the question of the descriptive adequacy of the characterization of a style, first brought up by Stiny and Mitchell (1978).

This example shows how Stiny's formalization integrates varying types of knowledge about designs – not only the designs themselves, but descriptions as well. Moreover, the example is taken from architectural history, which shows that the approach can provide insight into real architectural problems.

A note on the illustrations

The descriptions of the ting hall transverse frames (figs. 2–17) have been translated into English rather literally, so that the proposed functions will be valid whether the descriptions are in English or in Chinese. The illustrations here were reprinted in Liang (1983, 313–321) and originally appeared in an unspecified older source. The drawings and the descriptions are sometimes incorrect and, between editions of the Yingzao fashi, inconsistent; this includes the illustrations here. However, it is easy and uncontroversial to infer the correct drawings and descriptions; we follow Chen's (1993, 108) standardized version.

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Made by Chinese: Shanghai Tang and the Development of Contemporary Chinese Couture

san san kwan

They have been calling it Poon-Tang corner (Williams 107). Ever since Hong Kong impresario David Tang set up shop on Madison Avenue – right across from Barney's, which is controlled by fellow Hong Kong mogul Dickson Poon – fashion watchers have been quick to make colorful remarks, undoubtedly inspired by Tang's own brash style. David Tang is a profane, cocky Hong Kong socialite with an uppercrust colonial upbringing. Owner of the China Club, a super-exclusive hub for the monied, famous, and well-heeled in Hong Kong and Beijing, he also founded the new retail store, Shanghai Tang, a hip, upwardly mobile emporium that sells Chinese haute couture, gifts, and products for the home. Shanghai Tang opened its doors to Hong Kong in 1994 and then unveiled its New York location in November of 1997, just in time for the post-Thanksgiving rush.

Shanghai Tang sells Chinoiserie-gone-chic and revolution-turned-camp. The store irreverently appropriates from a dizzying mix of eras and forms: icons from Communist revolutionary propaganda, fashions from colonial 1930s Shanghai, ancient dynastic designs, Tibetan color schemes, Buddhist imagery, Chinese superstitious symbols, etc. The new Madison Avenue store is blindingly colorful: lime green, acid purple, candy apple red, fuchsia, Day-glo orange. An enormous bat design, representing good luck, curls its lemon yellow way along the elevator cab that pierces the tri-level space. Chinese antiques – cherry wood tables and matching stiff-backed chairs, herbalist cabinets, old mirrors, and calligraphy brush stands – are scattered amid louder versions of Orientalia, like bulbous red lanterns and gold-tinted folding screens. On the racks hang traditional Chinese qi pao's in the same vibrant shades of the store.

The dresses are hand-tailored and come in the conventional silk or brocade, as well as any number of furry, fuzzy, scratchy, shiny, shimmery, or squeaky synthetic fabrics. For men, there are Mao suits in quilted leather or green velvet. To match the suits, Shanghai Tang sells Red Guard caps, reminiscent of the 'good old days' of the Cultural Revolution. In the display cases sit watches with hand-waving images of Deng Xiao Ping, fluorescent Mao mugs, napkins depicting happy coolie laborers, furry Manchu hats, and the white crocheted doilies seen on the arms of every chair in photographs of official Communist summit meetings. Chinese revolutionary anthems, intermingled with 1930s Shanghai lounge-pop, blare from speakers throughout the store.

David Tang claims as his main objective the introduction to the world of China's first recognizable brand (Elegant 62). Tang wants to establish China on the global market, not as a manufacturer of electronics or automobiles or the like, but as a leader in the elite and glamorous fashion industry. The question is whether he can initiate a new Chinese style (Alexander B30) without risking the old tendency towards Orientalism. In the West, images of China are driven by colonial constructs, opium-steeped fantasies of Oriental mystique and submission. Traditionally, it is this vision of the East that sells on Madison Avenue – home of the establishment consumer. So how can Shanghai Tang escape the cultural associations which customers are bound to carry with them into the store?

The question raises a more theoretical concern regarding the project of postmodernism as an agent for social change. Critics of postmodernism sustain little faith that the postmodern form is anything more than a pastiche of styles juxtaposed without integrity

difference for its own sake. But perhaps the postmodern aesthetic of stylistic multiplicity can serve a political purpose. Perhaps one should consider the possibility that David Tang's ironic send-up of Orientalia, his hipped-out Mao and electrified Confucius, actually works to subvert orientalism. This postmodern pastiche would serve to overturn traditional ideas of China in favor of dynamic and contemporary ones.

Parody: Surface with Depth

Skeptics claim that postmodernism's preoccupation with appearance and its perhaps irresponsible dismissal of history reduce forms to mere simulacra. By this argument, postmodern art reproduces without creating, and is in that respect the end of the distinctive individual brush stroke (Jameson 15). Empty of any unique style, postmodernism has no ego. Without an ego, a subject who feels, there is no emotional content or pull. (15) While Shanghai Tang undoubtedly indulges in pretty pictures and imaginative histories, this effect need not imply that the store lacks an ego.

Postmodernism is not simply random difference. Ideally, it is driven by the theory that the master narrative of history is an illusion. There is no linear progression or advancement of society (a belief upon which imperialism was founded), only synchronic repetition and reiteration. There are no essential (White) truths, only multiple perspectives. While these ideas portray seemingly bleak prospects, postmodern thought actually opens up the possibil-

ity for emergent voices, minority voices previously buried by the predominance of Euro-American authority. Of course, the field of postcolonialism presents one forum for these new voices, and since Shanghai Tang hails directly from the recently decolonized territory of Hong Kong, its presence almost inherently invokes postcolonial discourse. In his bid for Chinese fashion, Tang, a former colonial subject and self-admitted Anglophile, carefully maneuvers between two dominant powers – a postmodern-style postion made comprehensible only through the context of Hong Kong's postcolonial moment.

The postmodern aesthetic, relying on notions of 'aspect' and 'simulacra', provides an ideal forum for minority empowerment. As Dorinne Kondo, in her book, *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater*, argues, gender, sexuality, and race may condition the degree to which we are conscious of the ways we perform ourselves in everyday life (16). Kondo argues that minority communities implicitly recognize identity as performance. Only a white heterosexual patriarchy can sustain the belief that surface and depth, appearance and reality, are separate: After all, who can afford to be unconcerned about his/her appearance? Who is allowed to ignore it with impunity? (15). Kondo attacks the moral stance that preoccupation with image is empty of political import. On the contrary, postmodernism uses image precisely to enact political change for the traditionally marginalized; those who have been constructed by their mien now look to masks to reconstruct.

Critics contend that postmodernism exercises pastiche and not parody. While parody conveys an ulterior motive, pastiche is pure imitation, relieved of the satiric impulse. Sometimes, though, postmodernists choose specific quotes toward specific ends. Sometimes, though, parodic quoting presents the most effective, if not the only, way to express resistance. A re-working of surfaces can be the most clever method of re-working hegemonic perspectives. Shanghai Tang, as a Hong Kong-based company poised at the beginning of Hong Kong's new phase under mainland Chinese rule, employs postmodern parody as a form of quiet political critique. In her essay on the documentary *Paris is Burning*, Judith Butler discusses parodys subversive effect:

> Where the uniformity of the subject is expected, where the behavioral conformity of the subject is commanded, there might be produced the refusal of the law in the form of the parodic inhabiting of conformity that subtly calls into question the legitimacy of the command, a repetition of the law into hyperbole, a rearticulation of the law against the authority of the one who delivers it. (Bodies That Matter 122)

Butler's use of the term law here is a Lacanian reference to the system of

utterance by which a subject becomes socially constituted. Ideally, that subject can refuse the law which names her through hyperbolic imitation. By over-aping law, performing it perhaps too well, she reveals its constructedness, its superficiality, and thereby resignifies its power over her. If it is constructed, it can be deconstructed.

The crucial characteristic of parody, the thing that separates it from pastiche and gives it critical import, is hyperbole. Shanghai Tang attacks Orientalism with excess. The qi pao's, dresses traditionally associated with dragon ladies, Suzie Wong, Shanghai Lil, Miss Saigon, any Asian whore, come in glow-in-the-dark hues and out-of-this-world fabrics. They are stranger than the fiction of the characters they usually imply. As a result, the dresses reveal these characters as fictions, fantasies wrapped in colonial desire. Extreme materiality reveals the truth of the always already constructed.

Not one to stop at Orientalism, David Tang also resists the mass propaganda of communism. After the transition of Hong Kong back to mainland Chinese rule, Shanghai Tang speaks to the ambivalence felt by many Hong Kongers in regard to the handover. While they are proud to be Chinese, and relieved to unstrap the yoke of colonialism, they also fear the censorship that China may potentially exercise.

Through parody, Shanghai Tang subtly snubs Chinese revolutionary rhetoric without rejecting Chinese patriotism. After all, Tang does claim

to be passionately Chinese (Bogert 48), though at the same time exuding rabidly Anglophiliac (Yaeger 14) tastes. And so the Mao caps are faithful copies, except that they come in blue velvet. The Deng Xiao Ping watches both honor China's deceased leader and make him a laughing stock. The filigreed silver glass holders are identical to those used for official functions in communist-socialist led China, only Shanghai Tang sells them at competitive market prices. As Butler writes in another essay, parody exists in a sort of indecisive space between attraction and repulsion:

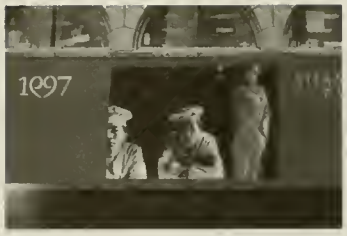
> Parody requires a certain ability to identify, approximate, and draw near; it engages an intimacy with the position it appropriates that troubles the voice, the bearing, the performativity of the subject such that the audience or the reader does not quite know where it is you stand, whether you have gone to the other side, whether you remain on your side, whether you can rehearse that other position without falling prey to it in the midst of the performance.
> (Merely Cultural 3)

Thus, parody represents a method for expressing Hong Kong's ambivalence towards both Western colonialism and Chinese communism. It serves the perfect role for a territory whose loyalties to both Britain and China are conflicted, simultaneously admiring yet bitter, proud yet fearful.

Mimicry: Global Capitalism with a Difference

Modernist hold-outs might still argue that such underhanded, mincing criticism avoids any real political bravery. The kind of parody identifiable in postmodernism only obscures the truth that postmodernism does not really represent utopian transformation. Despite the theoretical pretense that it will overturn hegemonic narratives, postmodernism is actually the cultural manifestation of capitalism's third phase: late, or multinational, capitalism. Bizarrely, this claim is also perfectly exemplified by Shanghai Tang. David Tang is an unabashed salesman. He is out to make money by turning Shanghai Tang into a world brand, a Chinese Nike (Williams 40). His project to establish a Chinese label signifies not only a demand for cultural respect, mere reparations for the history of Orientalism, but, more importantly, a bid for economic power. Thus David Tang's venture is the quintessential example of the globalization of capital. Shanghai Tang proves capitalism's influence beyond its origins in the West. Capitalism is a victor the world over.

Of course, it is possible that what truly generates postmodernism's heterogeneous materiality, all its professed room for choice, is not some kind of libertarian dissemination of power and agency, but something



Marx identified long ago: *commodity fetishism*. Appropriately enough, the culture of the simulacrum comes to life in a culture where exchange value has been so generalized that the actual use value of an object is effaced. It is a society in which "*the image has become the final form of commodity reification*" (Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 18). Shanghai Tang really only commodifies China, or perhaps re-Orientalizes China, under a guise of whimsy and kitsch. In the end, the store still sells exotica over imbued with desire. The blue velvet Mao caps are sumptuous and beautiful, but they occlude the history of oppression and famine which produced their originals. *The Village Voice* style editor articulates this irony best:

> Is there really a market in 1997 for napkins embroidered with tiny coolie laborers? Will no one feel slightly uncomfortable with the hawking of perky star-embellished Mao caps, now turned out in crimson and forest green? Is anyone just a wee bit queasy at the sight of two huge portraits of Mr. Tang hanging next to a vintage print of a Red Army re-education session? Is not a single citizen revolted to learn that Tang plans to open a restaurant above the store and call it the Long March bar?

There is something outrageous about selling items with a history of mass poverty and brainwashing behind them. Postmodernism is ruthless in its irreverent cannibalization (18) of the past in the service of the market. It is true that in its self-proclaimed heterogeneity postmodernism risks concealing the historical route by which things develop; this ultimately homogenizes everything by evacuating individual meaning and narrative. Perhaps postmodernism multiplies perspective only to strengthen the capitalist imperative.

And yet, global capitalism need not be read as simply the unquestioning adoption of Western values by the non-West. As various multinational corporations move from their bases in Europe and America to establish operations in developing countries, Shanghai Tang is one example of the transit of capital in the opposite direction. Capital becomes truly global when profits move not only from East to West, but also from West to East, North to South, etc. Global capitalism, when it spreads wealth in multiple directions, cooperates with the postmodern project of widely distributing cultural, political, and economic power – if not democratically, at least geographically. This may not be a victory worth celebrating. Still, Shanghai Tang may help shift the control of capitalism from the the West to some hands in the East.

Shanghai Tang's move to Madison Avenue proves that commodification is not solely enacted upon the non-West by Western powers, but is also taken up by the non-West itself in order to serve non-Western ends. David Tang embraces capitalism with enthusiasm, but he embraces it so that he can reorder power relations:

> "What's American?" asks Tang. "McDonald's . . . Coca-Cola . . . But whats Chinese? There is no Chinese brand. It just seems to me to be crazy."
> (Williams 45).

Tang's sly appropriation of Western capitalist values in the service of jostling the Western cultural hegemony echoes Homi Bhabha's notion of mimicry. Mimicry, in Bhabha's terms, is the desire for a reformed and recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost, but not quite, the same. In other words, the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (86)

In mimicking their colonizers, colonials validate the power of those rulers. They feed the rulers narcissism by presenting themselves in the images of the civilized, conforming Other. But because mimicry always reveals its slippage, it can also be a strategy for disavowing authority. Mimicry is never a perfect replication. The space of difference it creates is the space of subversion in which the colonized subject rejects domination by the colonizer.

Pleasure and Threat, Joy and Capitalism

Fashion writers describe Tang's venture with words like "colonizes" (Yaeger 14) and "invades" (Bogert 48) – terms which seem either to forget or belie Hong Kong's history of colonialism under the British. Article titles include *The Coming of the Tang*

Dynasty (Williams 40) and *Under the Spell of China* (Fiori 161). Implied in such descriptions is an American public under siege. "Get ready, America – Hong Kong impresario and tastemaker David Tang has his sights on you" (Alexander B24). If Shanghai Tang demonstrates a wholehearted adoption of American market strategies, there is something about this new store that smugly defies the model of Western capitalism, or at least the forces of desire that undergird it. Like the crass title depicting Shanghai Tang's location across from Dickson Poon's department store, David Tang's presence on Madison Avenue is both alluring and discomforting – especially paired with Poon's recent takeover of Barney's. Shanghai Tang seems to challenge the very ideas upon which the avenue thrives, even as it embraces those ideas.

It is Tang's blend of design with mockery that enables it to simultaneously take up the profit motive, that critics see as undergirding postmodernism, while simultaneously effecting the radical disruption which advocates ascribe to the postmodern project. Through the slippery techniques of parody and mimicry, forms which both perpetuate and undermine hegemonic narratives, Shanghai Tang straddles the uneasy border between beating the dominance of Western capital and joining it. Realistically, this is as much as anyone can expect.

Subversion, after all, is not the same as liberation. Critics of postmodernism may hold out for a transformative Utopia, but as they might also admit, what persists for now is capitalism. It would be delusional to posit a place outside of market influences; even joy now occurs fully within a commodity capitalist regime (Kondo 13). And what is so wrong about that? Shanghai Tang, for all its seduction or insidiousness or empowering effects – whichever – ultimately sells beautiful things.

In analyzing postmodernism's political effect we need to account for, and concede, our own desire to revel in spectacle, in beauty, in humor. Can you wear lipstick and still think? Can you care about design, color, texture, cut, draping, drafting techniques, display – that is, about clothes – and still be political? (Kondo 15). In order to understand the power of image, the depth behind the surface, we must confront our own complicity in the pleasure that images provide. Image is not trivial. It is not depthless. Beauty provides joy, even if it is a joy unavoidably imbricated in consumer desire. Thus we must accept beauty's place in the capitalist market in order to apprehend it, to contend with it, even to indulge in it.

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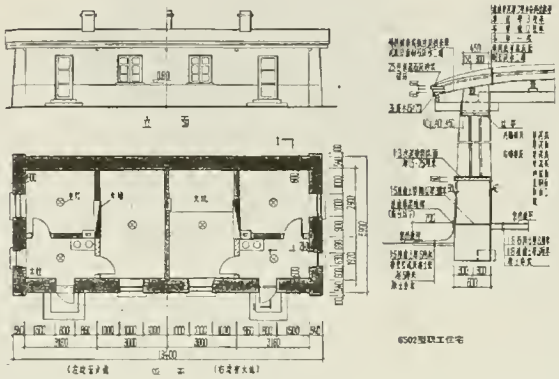
Socialist Ideology and Architecture: A Study of the Chinese Architectural Journal

kerry s. fan



1 Drawings of a gandalei house.

Socialist ideology has represented China's official cultural attitude since 1949. It has denied a large part of domestic cultural inheritance and rejected most contemporary developments in the arts and humanities of the West. This ideology, while undoubtedly leaving its imprints on buildings, has also strongly influenced the literature of architecture. The Architectural Journal, sponsored by the Chinese Building Ministry, is one of the most prominent publications in the profession. Inaugurated in 1954, the Journal established its authentic status with numerous academic and professional articles that served as an invaluable resource for the Chinese architectural community. However, during its first three decades, the Journal experienced intensive interactions between scholarship and politics, which are in many ways more comprehensive than the actual buildings for understanding Chinese socialist architecture.

Thematic structure

Although the Journal is a professional publication, at its inception the topics of its articles were often determined by politics. Taking cues from the Soviet Union, the Journal's inaugural statement declared that their foremost commitment was to further the goals and attitudes of the Chinese Communist Party. [1] The Journal also published numerous articles on Soviet architecture. Out of the seven feature articles in the first issue, three were translations of official Soviet documents on building and construction. For the fine arts at large, a policy of "socialist content and national form" was established. In architecture, this policy supported historical revivalism that combined massive modern edifices with the traditional roofs forms of old palaces.[2] The rhetoric that was used held that old palaces, though having served the rulers in the past, were created by the people and represented the people's wisdom; their form could therefore be proudly used for today's socialist architecture. However, in late 1954, the authorities in the Soviet Union began to attack the costly architectural style favored during the Stalin era.[3] This was again echoed in China as part of an ongoing Anti-Waste campaign that attacked the irresponsible use of financial and material resources.

1 "The Inaugural Statement," Architectural Journal, June 1954, p. 1.

2 In fact, this approach had been employed in China during the 1920s and the 1930s by both Western and Chinese architects. For a comprehensive review of Chinese historical revival architecture, see Fu Ch'ao-Ch'in, *Chinese New Architecture With Classical Style* (Taipei, Taiwan: Nan T'ien Book Press, 1993).

3 Stalin died in 1953. The attack against the Soviet official style started at the Soviet National Conference of the Architectural and Building Workers held from November 30 to December 6, 1954. Although the Soviet's criticism foreshadows the posthumous overthrow of Stalinist ideas in 1956, China's reversal does not imply a negation of Stalinism, as the Chinese Communist Party would later defend Stalin's political deeds. See Gong Deshun, et. al., *Modern Chinese Architectural History* (Tianjin: Tianjin Science and Technology Press, 1989), pp. 67-68.

2 A mud-construction temple built in 1865, showing the walls still in good condition.

On March 28, 1955, an editorial in China's top official newspaper, *People's Daily*, criticized unnecessary projects, lavish planning, and high cost construction. Under this criticism, the Journal was blamed for its promotion of a grandiose style, and its publication was suspended. When the publication resumed in July 1955, the Journal reprinted the Anti-Waste editorial of the *People's Daily*. With this reprint, the Journal joined the tradition established among professional periodicals of reprinting important political documents. This tradition climaxed in the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)[4], and continued until the early 1980s, when ideological conditions became substantially more liberal. Along with the reprint of the Anti-Waste editorial, the Journal produced a series of articles criticizing "waste projects." Although the Soviet influence was partially responsible for the costly style, none of the articles challenged the legitimacy of learning from the Soviet Union. Instead, criticism concentrated on stylistic and design problems, with blame placed on their designers' failure to follow the Communist Party's leadership. With such farfetched criticism, these articles adopted the formula that the Party was always the source of correctness, a formula that was common in popular criticism in all political campaigns.

In 1957, the Anti-Rightist campaign was launched against the intellectuals who had publicly doubted the Party's leadership. The Journal responded by devoting the entire September issue to this campaign. Once again, the Party-correctness formula was used. Civil constructions were now seen as socialist rather than professional achievements. Different opinions previously expressed on such projects were now seen as attacks against the Communist Party, and their authors became rightists.

Another politically initiated topic was the *gandalei*, a vernacular building technique involving rammed adobe construction. It was extensively used in Daching, the largest oil-field in China, which was constructed in the early 1960s and whose completion was publicized as a great socialist achievement. Among other merits of this great undertaking, gandalei was highly praised for it fast construction and minimal cost [Figure 1- Illustrated in Design and Research Institute of Construction, Daching Oil-Field, "Design and Construction of 'Gandalei' Buildings,"

4 In the first half of 1966, the most important reprint was "A Criticism of 'The Three-Family Village,'" written by Yao Wenyuan, a hard-line political theorist. First published in Wenhui Bao [Wenhui Newspaper] in late 1965, this article was considered a key document responsible for triggering the Cultural Revolution. Other reprints during this period include: "Politics is the Commander and the Soul," the 1966 New Year's editorial of the Red Flag magazine; and "Holding High the Great Red Flag of Mao Zedong Thought and Taking Active Part in the Socialist Cultural Revolution," an editorial of the Liberation Army's Newspaper, April 18, 1966.

3 A middle school. This three-story building of mud-construction was built in 1929.

Architectural Journal, April-May 1966, p. 31.]. The architecture of gandalei was also exemplary of the tradition of "self-reliance," a successful strategy used by the Communists in their difficult days during the 1930s and 1940s, and two decades later when China experienced serious economic problems. Moreover, the low, egalitarian living quality associated with this construction was believed to help suppress the bourgeois lifestyle, and thus made gandalei a symbol of proletarian ideals.[5] Aroused by this propaganda and fueled by naive enthusiasm, gandalei swept all construction sites in the country between 1965 and 1966. Locally found materials and backward methods were preferred to the factory made and technically advanced ones. In extreme cases, construction teams simply went out to find mud to build with, and set aside standard bricks that had already been shipped to the site.[6]

In February 1966, the Journal published two articles on gandalei. The first one discussed the political significance of applying gandalei in contemporary constructions. It used extensive quotes from political documents and provided technical evidence from old buildings of similar construction type [Figure 2 & 3]. The second article reported a design project that involved gandalei construction.[7] In subsequent gandalei articles, the concept was extended to any construction that did not involve modern technology. Most of these articles were formulated with a statement of the political importance of gandalei and a description of adapting primitive construction types in design.

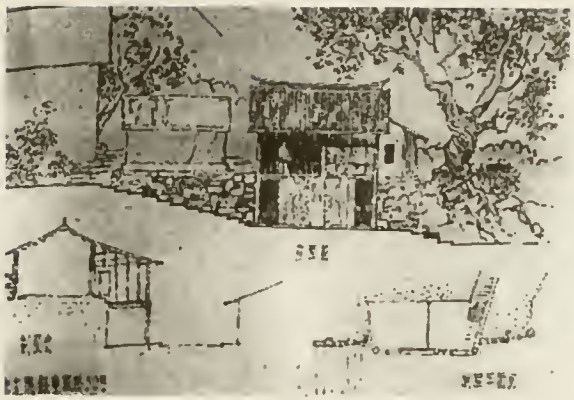
Ideological Elements

In the context of a socialist ideology that controlled all intellectual activities, the policy established was "utility, economy and aesthetic consideration when conditions permit." It was widely used in both academic and political writings. It appeared in the aforementioned Anti-Waste editorial as the source of correct building theory. However, when the policy was first instituted, professional articles rarely mentioned it. It was after the 1957 Anti-Rightist campaign, which suppressed any doubt of the Communist Party's correctness, that the profession recognized the political authority of such a policy and began to incorporate it in their writings.

5 Gong Deshun, et. al., Modern Chinese Architectural History, p. 103.

6 Ibid.

7 Sichuan Provincial Institute of Survey and Architectural Design, "Practicing 'Gandalei' in Civil Architecture is a Revolution in Design Work," "Two-Story Mud Brick Housing in Baihua New Village, Chengdu," Journal, February 1966, pp. 20-22, 22-23.



4 A village house near Chongqing, China.

Renowned architect Yuan Jingshen, in his January 1959 article on creating a new architectural style, defined the new style as "being able to represent 'utility, economy and aesthetics when conditions permit' as put forth by the Central [Committee of the Party]." He also maintained that to achieve this ideal, architects should embrace other principles of socialist ideology.[8] From June to September of that year, the Journal published a series of papers presented by prominent architects in a symposium held in Shanghai.[9] While a variety of aesthetic possibilities, including Western modernist ideas, were addressed in the symposium, most papers used this policy as both their theoretical framework and as the criterion with which to judge stylistic alternatives.

At this symposium, Professor Liang Sicheng praised the policy. A 1924 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Liang was one of China's most respected scholars for his contributions in the scholarship of Chinese architectural history. While his academic beliefs had all developed out of the past and from the West, he often spoke publicly of embracing socialist ideology. This dual attitude was reflected in his comments on architectural policy at the 1959 symposium. Although Liang mentioned the apparent similarity between Vitruvius' trilogy and the socialist architectural policy, he nevertheless viewed the policy as an entirely new creation of the policy maker:

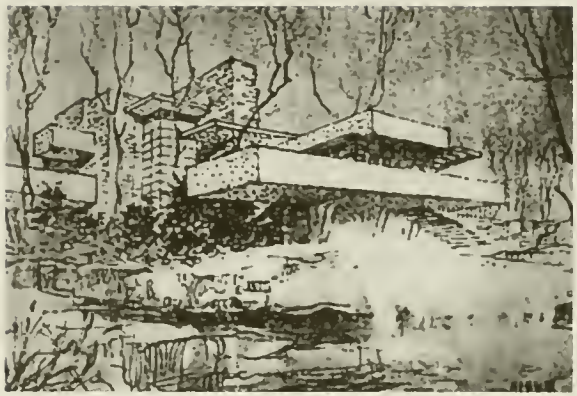
> Since the ancient time, numerous architectural theoreticians have repeatedly said that the three elements of the architecture were "commodity, firmness and delight." In the heritage of human history, we can indeed find a large number of buildings that present these three elements. In 1953 the Central Committee of our Party put forth the policy of "utility, economy, and, if possible, beauty." This is a great creation in architectural theory.[10]

Reverence towards the policy can also be understood as a tactic to protect scholarship; many theory articles treated the policy as an appended element, without drawing a logical connection to the discussion. Mu Xingyuan, for example, used this method in his June 1964 article. He opened the article with a statement that attributed China's architectural achievements to the policy. Then, throughout the remainder of the article, he discussed the relationship between

8 Yuen Ching-Sen [Yuan Jingshen], "Creation of the Modern Architectural Style," Journal, January 1959, pp. 38-39.

9 The symposium was the architectural aesthetics section in the larger Conference on Housing Standards and Aesthetics. The conference was particularly known for the report delivered by Liu Xiufeng, the Minister of the Chinese building Ministry. Entitled "The Characteristics of Chinese Socialist Architecture," this report epitomized all politically related aspects for architecture and was considered the classic official document for the profession.

10 Liang Sze-chen [Liang Sicheng], "From 'Utility, Economy and, if Possible, Beauty' to Tradition and Innovation," Journal, June 1959, pp. 1-4



5 Frank Lloyd Wright's Kaufmann House.

architecture and other fine arts, as well as between monumental structure and common buildings, without further referring to the policy.[11] Treated in such a manner, the policy became a political umbrella under which normal scholarship was carried out.

Emphasizing the cultural differences between socialism and capitalism was another central theme in socialist ideology. This doctrine rejected many ideas in contemporary Western architecture, such as expressionism and functionalism, that were often labeled as "capitalist architectural ideas."[12] In the early days of the Journal, contemporary Western architecture was occasionally discussed without ideological bias, as in the article by Luo Weidong on the works of Mies van de Rohe, or in the one by Zhou Puyi on Walter Gropius.[13] After the Anti-Rightist campaign, however, Western architecture disappeared from the Journal for several years. Then, in November 1962, the Journal published an article titled "Some Problems of Contemporary Architecture in Capitalist Countries." This article recognized the progressive nature of early modernist architecture as it replaced the historically more "backward" classicism; however, the works of Eero Saarinen, Le Corbusier, Hugh Stubbins, and other popular Western architects were labeled as formalism—a bad cultural ingredient according to socialist ideology. The article concluded that "such a mess" was inevitable in capitalist countries, where architecture was essentially hopeless.[14] The denial of contemporary Western architecture also dominated an article written by Wu Huanjia in June 1964. The subject of this article was the nomination of distinguished buildings held recently in the American Architectural Forum. The nominated projects included the Pepsi-Cola Headquarters by SOM, state buildings by Oscar Niemeyer, the TWA Terminal by Eero Saarinen, and Richards Medical Laboratories by Louis Kahn. The article described these buildings as "strange," "confusing," "ugly," and "meaningless", and heaped upon them great mockery and abhorrence. [15]

One may contend that the anti-capitalist formula served a function similar to the tactic of using architectural policy as a political umbrella. But in Wu's article, the entire text was composed of invectives against capitalist architecture, and the bias was so strong that it could only suggest the author's firm belief in socialist ideology. Sixteen years later, when political pressure

11 Mu Shing-Yuan [Mu Xingyuan], "On Architecture and Its Relation with Art," Journal, June 1964, pp. 26-28.

12 Zhai lilin, "On Aesthetics of Architecture and National Style," Journal, August 1955, pp. 46-48.

13 Luo Weidong, "Mies van de Rohe," Journal, May 1957, pp. 52-60; Zhou Puyi, "Walter Gropius," Journal, July 1957, pp. 35-38, August, pp. 60-65.

14 Guo Chi-yuan [Gu Qiyuan], "Some Problems of the Contemporary Architecture in the Capitalist Countries," Journal, November 1962, pp. 18-20.

15 Wu Huan-gai [Wu Huanjia], "Critique on 10 Western Architectural Works," Journal, June 1964, pp. 29-33.

6 The "Refuge Pavilion" in Confucius Residence at Qufu, Shandong, used in turbulent times by masters waiting for outside help

7 A proposal of a new village plan for a people's commune near Shanghai.

on scholarship was greatly loosened, Wu still maintained his abhorrence against Western modern art in a chapter he contributed to a college textbook. [16]

Flexibility and Dualism

Politically promoted topics usually met supportive responses in the Journal. Occasionally, different voices could also be heard. In a symposium on gandalei organized by the Journal, a few authors were allowed to express their reservations. Zhou Genliang, for example, questioned the practical feasibility of adopting a single construction type nationwide, and contended that following a political fashion without considering local conditions was questionable.[17] Another paper, presented by Huang Kangyu, warned that to imitate gandalei by lowering construction standards would inevitably result in poor durability and reduced safety.[18] Given the political seriousness of the subject, these disagreements, though moderate in their tone, were indeed very noteworthy.

In addition to these occasional dissenters, the *Journal* also published a small number of straight scholastic works that did not come with a political umbrella. One of them was Zheng Guangfu's article, "On Simplicity and Superfluousness of Architectural Decoration," published in January 1963.[19] In this article, Zheng compared the differences in visual effect between heavily decorated and plain buildings. He used Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Mies van der Rohe's Tugendhat House, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Kaufmann House as examples for analysis [Figure 4 & 5], without the ideological precaution that one would otherwise expect in such contexts.

While Zheng's writing represented a high degree of thematic integrity, articles involving stronger political influence could also be scholastically informative. This was exemplified in the articles produced around the political campaign, "Criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius," in the mid-1970s. The stated purpose of this campaign was to blame the Confucian doctrine as the philosophical source for Lin Biao, the Communist Party's vice chairman who died when fleeing from an unsuccessful coup.[20] In the past, numerous temples had been erected to worship

16 In particular, Wu described cubism, expressionism, and surrealism as "reflecting the social and spiritual decadence and emptiness of contemporary bourgeoisie." He also scorned Marcel Breuer's Bauhaus paintings as "messy formalist stuff." See Tongji University, et. al., *Recent and Contemporary History of the Architecture of the Foreign Countries* (Beijing: China Building Industry Press, 1982), p. 71.17 Zhou Genliang, "Comprehensively Understand the 'Gandalei' Spirit," Journal, May 1966, p. 59.

18 Huang Kangyu, "In Prevention of Excessive Quality Reduction," *Journal*, May 1966, p. 59.

19 Cheng Kwang-fu [Zheng Guangfu], "On Simplicity and Superfluousness of Architectural Decoration," *Journal*, January 1963, pp. 30-31.

20 Lin Biao was chosen as Mao's successor but later lost Mao's trust. He was killed in an aircraft accident on his way to exile. Although the campaign criticized Lin Bao and Confucius, the unnamed target was the conservative group in the Communist Central Committee represented by Zhou Enlai.

Confucius as a deified master teacher. Of all these worshipping sites, the largest and most sacred was the temple-residence compound in Confucius' hometown Qufu, in Shandong Province. The compound is also a prominent site in Chinese architectural history. These architectural attributes established a unique connection between the temple-residence compound and political criticism. The article by Wu Liangyong in the June 1975 *Journal* argued that, since Confucian doctrine provided the ethics and legitimacy for the old rulers, the worshipping of Confucius must be condemned, and with it the compound for its important role in facilitating Confucianism.[21]

However, an article published in August 1974 presented serious scholarship within the same political confines.[22] Entitled "The Temple of Confucius in Qufu and the Struggle Between Revering and Opposing Confucius," this article set out with a statement that the study of the site was to deepen the criticism of Confucius. The article also aligned itself with the politics by blaming the old rulers' admiration of Confucius and praising the peasant rebellions against Confusianism. The article then presented a well-organized cluster of historical data about the compound, from its original to current condition, from historical events on the site to its rebuilding and repair, including costs and concurrent political and cultural background. The article also described the damages to the compound caused by peasant rebellions [Figure 6]. Returning to the political theme, the article concluded that although the compound had historically served as the center place for worshipping Confucius, its architectural value could not be denied as it was, after all, the creation of the people.

Structured both as political criticism extended to architecture and as academic study fashioned with political idioms, this article offered a dual reading for both political and professional interests. In fact, many writings involving political themes also exhibited this dual quality. For example, the gandalei articles could be considered as critical for the study of vernacular building. The dual reading was also offered in the articles published in late 1958, when the People's Commune was established in rural areas. Installed as government units that also controlled local economy and communal life, the Commune was heralded as a giant step that brought the country closer to a communist society. The *Journal* immediately filled its pages with articles on the People's Commune. Although the idea of the Commune was often discussed using utopian terms, proposals for specific, localized communes turned out to be carefully studied regional and town plans [Figure 7]. These plans were not only professionally appreciable, but also practically appropriate for the vast rural population in China.

In retrospect, we find that when political control was relatively restrained, the dualism between politics and scholarship would favor the latter. For this reason the *Journal* became the target of the next political criticism twice: once in 1955, during the Anti-Waste campaign and again in 1965, during the Design Revolution.[23] During the Cultural Revolution, the *Journal* was suspended again for seven years. Intertwined with the dramatic political events and the compromise between socialist ideology and professional scholarship, the *Journal*, as witness and participant, played a special role in the discourse of Chinese socialist architecture.

21 Wu Liang-yung [Wu Liangyong], "Worshipping Confucius and Repairing Confucian Temple Cannot Avert the Inevitable Extinction of Reactionaries," *Journal*, June 1975, pp. 10-12.

22 Theory Group of the Construction Committee of Shantung [Shandong] Provincial Capital, "The Confucian Temple in Chu-fu [Qufu] and the Struggle between Revering and Opposing Confucius," *Journal*, August 1974, pp. 11-17.

23 The Design Revolution started in late 1964 in the areas of technology and engineering, including architectural design. Although the purpose of the campaign was to reduce the gap between theory and practice, as it was carried out, emphasis was placed on the practice side, which was considered to be part of the proletariat culture as opposed to the theory that was associated with bourgeois culture. A major blame on the *Journal* was for overlooking building practice.

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Interviews with Charles Correa & Tunney Lee

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I interviewed Charles Correa and Tunney Lee on separate occasions. The questions posed are specifically aimed at introducing them to a younger generation, especially current students of architecture. Rather than ask them about their own work, I posed questions that addressed larger issues of style, culture, history, and working cross-culturally.

I asked identical questions of both architects in order to create a "virtual" dialogue. Note that their responses are to the original question and not to each other.

Biographical sketch

Could you give a brief bio of yourself for the readers who may not be familiar with you?

Charles Correa

After finishing my schooling in India, I came to the United States to study architecture – first at Michigan and then here at MIT. But I really learned my most important lessons after I got back to India and started trying to design buildings myself. I got an awful lot by studying the wonderful old buildings and cities there – as well as the new work by Corbusier. It seems like architecture is something you have to teach yourself as you go through life.

Tunney Lee

I was born in China, in Guangdong. I came to Boston at age seven and grew up in Boston's Chinatown. I studied architecture at Michigan. Later I worked for Buckminster Fuller, then in New York for Breuer, Franzen and I.M.Pei. After that I came back to Boston to work for the Boston Redevelopment Authority, then to Washington to work on Urban Renewal, and then back to Boston to teach at MIT. From 1990 to 1998, I worked in Hong Kong helping the Chinese University of Hong Kong establish a department of architecture.

On architectural style

Could you comment on the current theoretical debate on architectural style?

Charles Correa

Architecture isn't about styles – it's about attitudes. A good school, for example, shouldn't provide solutions to problems, but should teach you how to pick up a problem. What the problem will actually be depends on many other variables: the actual time and place in which you will work, the local materials available, the climate and culture, and so forth. These are the elements from which an architect forges his own natural style.

In this process, the most important caveat is to try to avoid making a superficial cartoon version of the culture in which you live. Instead, try to express the human and cultural deep-structure that generated those patterns in the first place. The genetic code, so to speak. And the further you go into the specifics of that deep-structure, the more you might find it turns out to be about universals – that is, feelings and emotions shared by other human beings around the globe.

Tunney Lee

Well, I'm going to translate this question to what is happening in Asia. If you take the statement "architecture always reflects what's really going on in society" as a truism, it means that China and Taiwan are socially and culturally very confused places right now, even internally.

Taiwan has gone from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy, and now manufactures everything from tennis balls to computer monitors. In China, the same thing is happening and as a result, the architecture is not as clearly identified as it used to be. Traditional societies are very clear in their intents, but modern societies and modernizing societies are much more complex and ambiguous.

What is more important is identity and identity is in here. (point to his heart) The external forms of architecture are out there and, by definition, superficial. So when looking at Asia, it's important to remember that to these cultures, what's in here (points to his heart) is something that is still in transition.

Working abroad

What are the positive effects, in your opinion, of working and teaching in two different parts of the world?

Charles Correa

Well, the perspective it gives you. I find the old buildings in India are wonderfully ambitious. A Hindu temple is not trying to be just a "pretty" building – it is a construct that seeks to represent the non–Manifest world in which we dwell. In short: Architecture as a Model of the Cosmos. Just as the Buddhist stupa models the mythic Mount Meru and the seven levels of Nirvana. In contrast, the buildings in our contemporary cities seem myopic and banal. Perhaps it is not the fault of the architects – but of society itself. What exactly can a 40–story office building or a 500–room hotel express – except perhaps the commercial aspects of the society in which they exist?

Then again, the contrast in the available resources in different parts of the world can teach us a lot. For instance in India, air–conditioning is a luxury – which means that an architect cannot design in a willful and arbitrary manner and hope that his mechanical engineer will bail him out. On the contrary. His designs must, through their very form and topology, generate the micro–climate the environment needs. Traditionally, this has always been the well-spring of the architectural imagination – as witnessed in the wonderful courtyards and water fountains of the Alhambra in Granada, trapping and cooling the hot dry winds of Andalusia. A true Machine for Living! This is a lesson of fundamental importance – one almost impossible to learn in the United States.

Tunney Lee

I think travelling or working or doing a studio elsewhere is not that important for what you learn about the other place. You don't ever really learn much about the other place, but you will learn a lot more about your own place. You often see things done differently and you have to ask *why*. At home, you never question your assumptions because that's just the way it is.

For example, in America high density is bad, automatically. High rise buildings are bad. People don't even consider it as an option anymore. Well, are there places where highrises may be right? And then of course you go to Hong Kong and there is nothing but highrises! And you say, "Wait a minute, something is different here!" And then you really have to look at those assumptions about density. Who says? Or perhaps it's right, but why is it right? Why is it right here, but not right somewhere else? That's probably the most important thing to learn from traveling or studying abroad – to learn about the context for designing.

Problems in Asia

What do you see is the greatest problem in Asia right now?

Charles Correa

One of the most discouraging aspects of Asia is the number of architectural firms who see themselves as a kind of second-hand re-run of America. They are almost the exact equivalent of the kind of dumb businessman who sits in his postmodern house watching re-runs of tacky soap operas like Dynasty – when all the while they have their own traditions, which could generate wonderfully rich and different kinds of TV programs.

We certainly don't need to see ourselves as in a sort of queue, with all the various countries in a kind of pecking order. Only China can address the problems of China – and only Chinese architects have the unique and God-given opportunity of working at the cutting-edge of that exciting adventure. Just as only a mid-western American architect could have developed the Prairie houses of Oak Park. In that sense, all great pieces of architecture, from Fathepur-Sikri to Frank Lloyd Wright, are regional. By fulfilling these parameters so brilliantly, they become universal. In short: Asian architects should forget about what is going on in the West and start looking at their own context.

Tunney Lee

Well, there are a lot of architects in Asia right now who are trying to find cultural identity through architecture and, basically, they're on the wrong track. It's kind of like the story about the guy looking for something under the street lamp. The policeman comes and says, "What are you looking for?", and the guy says, "I lost my ring." The policeman then asks, "Did you lose it here?", and the guy replies, "No, I lost it over there." "Then why are you looking over here?" "Because the light's over here."

People are looking to how buildings *look* for identity, but you can't find identity there. It's not there. The perfect example of this was the situation in Beijing a few years ago, when the mayor of Beijing would not let a permit go through if you didn't stick some Chinese architectural detail on the building. Now, what does that represent? A kind of authoritarian communist party boss mentality that is disguised as a forward–thinking nationalism.

In the meantime there are housing problems to be solved in China. What is the emerging nature of cities? What about health care? Schooling? When those get solved, architecture will emerge. But don't ask "What is the right stylistic stuff to express Chineseness?" This is the wrong question! It's like asking, "What kind of clothes should I wear today to appear modern and competent?" or "Don't judge me by my behavior, judge me by my clothes!"

The role of history

What can we learn from the past?

Charles Correa

The past? Here in America, I would look at a place like Oak Park, Illinois. If ever I saw a Brave New World, this is it. One feels the optimism of a whole new century getting underway – and Wright was undertaking the problem of inventing the way Americans were going to live for the next hundred years. He did this through his firm grasp of the cultural deep–structure we spoke about before – and through his intuitive understanding of the aspirations of the new America that was just beginning. Architecture is informed by the past – but it also must embody our aspirations, of what must come into being.

Tunney Lee

One thing ... I was sitting in an ARCASIA Conference during a long discussion on national identities in architecture and a Japanese architect said "Look we went through this when Japan was a fascist country with a military dictatorship. To promote nationalism and to counter western influence, the military dictators decreed that all buildings had to be built in the Crown Style based on traditional Japanese architecture. We were very happy to get rid of it after World War 2!"

Advice to young architects

What advice would you give to the younger generation?

Charles Correa

A friend of mine was working in Corbusier's office in Paris. After two years or so, he decided to come back to Bombay. Corb, who was very old and intimidating at the time, came up to my friend's desk and said: "So you are going back to Bombay? Do you have a job?" My friend replied: "No, but I'll find something when I get there". And Corbusier said: "Be careful, eh? Whenever you get to a station, there is always a train leaving the platform. Don't jump on just because it's leaving. Make sure its your train".

I think that's excellent advice. It's a shame it isn't handed out to graduates every year.

Tunney Lee

Going back to the Japanese architect ... he also said, "I am a Japanese architect. Born in Japan. Trained in Japan. Traveled abroad, and did some studying and working abroad. And if I get a project in Japan funded by a Japanese client, why isn't what I do 'Japanese architecture' by definition? Does it have to look "Japanese"?

What I think is important for your generation is the process of discovering this, because you won't find it by searching under the street light. It's not there.

How Buildings Divide and Unite Us: The Case of Mandal (Gujarat, India)

ritu bhatt & alka patel

Jami Masjid, Mandel

In Indian architectural history, religious categorization of buildings, as Hindu, Buddhist, Jaina, and Muslim, has been the basic methodological tool for scholars. This distinction is a legacy of the British historians, who used it in an initial effort to come to terms with the bewildering variety of architecture in the subcontinent. This taxonomic classification, which began in the mid-19th century and which continues to the present, has transformed buildings into religious identities. Mosques have become Muslim and Temples have become Hindu. Recent scholarship has uncovered the political motivations of the British colonialists that underlie these divisions and has pointed to the pitfalls of continuing with such a taxonomy.[1] Should these religious affiliations be completely abandoned? Is some identification with religion vital and necessary for the everyday negotitations that enable communities of diverse belief systems to live together? In this paper, we will review how this classification of buildings as Hindu or Islamic affects the perceptions and practices of those for whom the building is not an object of study, but a living and integrated part of their daily lives.

The categorization of Indian architecture as Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist, and so forth can be traced back to James Fergusson, who in his pioneering text entitled *The History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (2 vols., 1876) turned them from merely stylistic descriptions to operative categories.[2] Architecture, for Fergusson, was fundamentally a "racial art".[3] In his taxonomy, buildings resembled the races that built them. Structural clarity, simple rhythms, and large expanses of walls were not the attributes of Islamic buildings, but rather were the characteristics of the Muslims who built them. Similarly, a Hindu mind, considered to be mysterious, metaphysical, and transcendental, created complex Hindu forms.

The superimposition of the religious categories of 'Hindu' and 'Islamic', have fundamentally distorted the writing of the history of architecture in India. For example, any building that represents a mixture of elements from both styles is necessarily seen as a confluence of two thoughts. Fatehpur Sikri, the new capital near Agra that Akbar founded in 1571, is a case in point: a whole political history of the construction of the complex is based on a simplified reading of the confluence of Hindu and Islamic architectural vocabulary.[4]

The superimposed religious categorization has been in turn perpetuated by a number of misperceptions. For example, there is the repeated mention of pillage and destruction of temples by Muslims in northern and western India, and the belief that from the end of the 13th cen-

1 Thomas Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, Los Angeles, 1989; Ritu Bhatt and Sonit Bafna, "Post-Colonial Narratives of Indian Architecture," *Architecture +Design*, Nov-Dec, 1995, pp. 85-89.

2 James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Far Eastern Architecture*, London,1876. Fergusson, however, later recognized the simplification that such classification entails. In a lecture given to the Royal Society of Arts entitled, "On the Study of Indian Architecture," Fergusson said, "I learnt that there was not only one Hindu and one Mohammedan style in India, but several species of class; that these occupied well-defined local provinces, and belonged each to ascertained ethnological divisions of the people." Reprinted in James Fergusson, *On the Study of Indian Architecture Delhi*, 1977, pp.5-6. However, it was not long before architectural historians were casually writing about two fundamentally different architectures in India, each identified with a religious community. See, for example, Bannister Fletcher's *History of World Architecture on the Comparative Method* London: 1899, pp. 889-909.

3. Fergusson, "Introduction", pp.3-49.

4 The tradition of studying Fatehpur Sikri as a confluence of Hindu and Islamic styles was criticized in an issue of *MARG*, v.38, no. 2, entitled "Akbar and Fatehpur Sikri", Bombay, 1986. This approach was found to be too simplistic to define the profusion

The Khan Mosque (Khan-ki Masjid), Dholka (Gujarat), dated 1333. This mosque shows many elements that are considered typically "Islamic": the domical construction, the use of plastered brick, and the tall flanking minarets.

tury till the close of the 16th century, no Hindu or Jain temples were built.[5] In addition, the consistent deprecation within traditional western scholarship of Hindu aesthetic vocabulary as profusely sculptural and mysterious, in comparison to the Islamic as structurally clear and expansive, has further reinforced this dichotomy.[6]

In medieval Indian architecture, it is true that there was a confluence of two building traditions: the *trabeate*, belonging to a plastic aesthetic, was indigenous to the Indian subcontinent, while the *arcuate*, stressing surface decoration and simple volumes, developed in Central Asia. In the scholarship, however, this confluence is not described as the meeting of two building traditions, but is rather interpreted as a religious and political statement of the domination of Islam over the Hindu population of the subcontinent. Thereby, architectural traditions are given successive politico-religious purposes by the scholarship: First, they are made synonymous with the predominant religions of their respective places of origin (Central Asia/Islam, India/Hinduism); and second, they are interpreted as a symbol of the triumph of Islam over Hindu India. If the superimposed religious dichotomy were de-emphasized, surely confluence of building tradition, and not the competition of religio-political entities, would inform the conclusions of scholarship.

In this vein, scholars have in recent years underscored the political motivations that underlie the categorization of Indian architecture into communal styles.[7] These scholars point out that, for the British, the use of these communal categories advanced important political objectives, aiding in the division of the people and thus strenghtening British rule over India. Thomas Metcalf, in his book *The Imperial Vision* (1989) states that, "if all architectural elements were defined as 'Hindu' or 'Muslim', nothing remained unknown. Everything – the arch, the dome, the bracket capital, the decorative motif – had its place in the comprehensive system. What the colonial ruler had explained, he, of course, controlled."[8]

The political motivations of the British are also evident in the first few reports of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The ASI, formed in 1865, was the official body of the British Government responsible for completing the survey and documentation of the historical monuments of India. In ASI's first report, Sir Alexander Cunningham outlined the motivation: "to throw light upon the early history of England's dependency; history which, as time moves on, as the country becomes more easily accessible and traversable, and as Englishmen are led to

of styles in Akbar's palaces. Fatehpur Sikri's eclecticism was attributed to several factors: the formative character of the Mughal court, Akbar's support for experimentation in the arts, and his fascination with his Timurid ancestry. Furthermore, some authors have suggested that the British projection of Fatehpur Sikri as a representation of the Akbar's religious tolerance was politically motivated. Its role was to legitimize British rule over India. See, for example, Thomas Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*.

5 Alka Patel, "Archaeological Survey and Art Historical Analysis of Early Islamic Architecture of Western India," Annual Conference of the College Art Association: New York, February 12-15, 1997.

6 Partha Mitter in *Much Maligned Monsters* (1977) points out that while Islamic art in the form of Mughal paintings and descriptions of Mughal architecture was acceptable to the Europeans and even found admirers, Hindu art still presented problems of accommodation to Western aesthetics. Most particularly Mitter attributes the resistance of Western historians to Hindu iconography and to profuse ornamental sculpture of South Indian temples to a fundamental classical bias in the Western art historical tradition. See Partha Mitter, "Western Bias in the Study of South Indian Aesthetics," *South Asian Review* Vol 6, 1973, pp.125-136. Anthony Welch & Howard Crane, "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of

Silva Temple, Menal (Rajasthan)
12th century
According to typical scholarship, this temple exhibits traditional Hindu elements: trabeated construction, extensive sculptural ornament, and a tall,curvilinear *sikhara*

give more thought to India than such as barely suffices to hold it and govern it, will assuredly occupy, more and more, the attention of the intelligent and enquiring classes in European countries."[9] Even scholars, who do not see the political interpretations as an adequate explanation, also agree that division of the monuments into religious categories was at first a necessary construct. They underscore that it should remain precisely that, a construct, and not become the ultimate aim in the study of Indian architectural history.

Now that we are aware of the dangers, both in terms of its political implications and its intellectual limitations, of an architectural analysis aimed exclusively at identifying the religious pedigree of its object, it is time to entirely rethink the issues of religious identity, identifiability, and their relationship to architecture. In order to demonstrate the inadequacy of both the earlier colonial religious categorization and the recent suggestions to abandon them completely, we have chosen an isolated, non-descript village settlement in Gujarat, India. Here, the religious identification of buildings by the people points to how everyday practices of responsibility and attribution are negotiated at a level that is not abstract – as in the academic classification of buildings as Hindu or Islamic. It is, instead, a subtle negotiation of occasional exclusion and mutual neglect based on a deep religious faith in one's own belief system. This allows the systems to co-exist without a conscious preoccupation with the boundaries between them. By doing a detailed study of the residents' perceptions of the religious buildings, we hope to point to the problems involved in freezing buildings as "monuments of importance" under the pretext of saving them, and thus divorcing them from their real inhabitants.

A rural village named Mandal is located in the northwest corner of Ahmadabad district, Gujarat, approximately 25 kilometers northwest of Viramgam. Presently the village is comprised of about 2000 inhabitants, most of whose earning members are dedicated to agriculture. The population consists of both Hindus and Muslims, living in separate areas within the boundaries of the village, and in daily contact with each other.

Presently, Mandal is a relatively isolated settlement, located in the interior of Gujarat, and off the major highways connecting the nearby important cities, such as Ahmadabad or Palanpur (Mahesana District). However, historical evidence, such as that provided by the presence of historical monuments, indicates that the village did not always occupy such a politically non-descript position.

the Delhi Sultanate," *Muqarnas I* (1983).

7 Same as footnote 1

8 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p.52.

9 Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India*, Annual Report, I (1862-63) [Four Reports Made During The Years 1862-65].

10 The mosques of Mandal first seem to have been noticed at the end of the 19th century, when the still British-governed Archaeological Survey of India conducted prospections in Gujarat. Cf. J. Burgess, *Archaeological Survey of India* (New Imperial Series) vol. 33, (Archaeological Survey of Western India vol. 8), *The Muhammadan Architecture of Ahmadabad*, vol. 2 (1905), pp. 92-93.

11 Idem, p. 92.

Mandal – The roof in disrepair

The relatively prominent position of Mandal in the later medieval period is evidenced by the architectural remains found there. Three mosques in the village, approximately datable to the 15th through 16th centuries, were built within one kilometer of each other, and indicate that there was a significant Muslim community in the settlement even during medieval times. The Jami Masjid, built in the 14th century, is the largest of the three buildings, the other two being the Sayyid-ni Masjid and the Qazi-ki Masjid. It is the presence of these monuments in Mandal, as examples of Sultanate-period architecture in Gujarat, that primarily attracts the attention and the visits of occasional tourists and architectural historians to the site of the village community. 10

The Jami Masjid was considered "a very poor specimen of Muhammadan architecture"[11] when it was first documented by the Archaeological Survey of India, and has received virtually no scholarly attention thereafter.[12] Nonetheless, it is relevant to the point raised in the present work, namely the religious identifiability of architecture. It has been discussed above that the identification of buildings by scholars as 'Hindu' or 'Islamic' has much distorted architectural analysis. However, in eschewing this classification, we may be committing an error of equal magnitude, since in the everyday lives of the people of Mandal, the historical monuments in their midst do indeed have a clear religious identity and function.

As has been the case since the medieval period, the quarters of an urban or semi-urban settlement are largely distinguished by the religious demnomination of their inhabitants. It is also the case that these quarters are situated in close proximity with each other, having unofficial, fluid, and thin boundaries between them. In Mandal, the Hindu quarter is tightly pressed against the walls of the Jami Masjid, whose southern wall seems to function as an unofficial quarter boundary itself.

Due to the disrepair into which the congregational mosque has fallen, the season of monsoon rains is a particularly difficult one, both for the building and the community. The ponding of excessive water on the roof of the mosque causes spillage into the area adjacent to the southern wall, precisely where the Hindu community has put up its dwellings. Many of the dwellings are mud-walled and metal-roofed, so that this spillage causes great inconvenience to these inhabitants, and occasional damage to their homes. The weight of the water, coming down hard atop the structures, causes loud noise and even some bending of the metal roofs.

12 As stated above, scholarship on the medieval architecture of the northern sub-continent, continues to base a large proportion of its analysis on the religious categorization of the buildings. Within this general trend, the rigidity and inaccuracy of this categorization becomes apparent: Most studies of 'Islamic' architecture focus upon the Tughluq buildings of Delhi, as these fit more readily into the definition of Islamic architecture. Unfortunately, the buildings of the western region do not fall so easily into this definition, and hence have received only cursory attention in the scholarship. Cf. especially A. Welch & H. Crane, op. cit. (1983).

According to one villager, Diwan Yusuf Muhammad,[13] during every monsoon the Hindus of the quarter understandably complain with great vigor to the Muslims that the Jami Masjid needs repair, so that they and their homes are not unexpectedly splashed by heavy water, and damage and injury are avoided.

Even though the Muslims of the village are willing and even eager to resolve the dispute, they find themselves in a position of helpless desperation. The mosque is still the congregational mosque, and is used for Friday prayers; the Muslims' concern for its maintenance is motivated by their concern for conducting what they consider proper worship. But, since the Jami Masjid is also recognized as an historical monument by the Archaeological Survey of India, they are forbidden to intervene in any way in its physical appearance or maintenance. Only trained conservationists of the ASI, or other designated members from the institution, have the legal jurisdiction to perform repairs upon the building. Due to Mandal's minor political and electoral importance, however, the ASI has not even sent regular surveillance deputies to check upon the monument, much less deploy a team of conservationists to the site. [14]

Herein resides a conflict which, Diwan Yusuf claims, is serious enough that it threatens to cause sectarian violence. In such an event, the rift would tear at the fabric of the village community of Hindus and Muslims – a fabric of mutual and reciprocal dependence that has been woven over the centuries. The Hindus clearly associate the Jami Masjid with the Muslim community of the village, and assign the responsibility of its upkeep to that Muslim community and not to the ASI. Thus, according to this point of view, blame for the inconvenience and occasional damage which Hindus have suffered on account of the mosque's disrepair is also assignable to the Muslims. The latter themselves accept these assignations, both of responsibility for upkeep of the building, and of blame for the inconvenience suffered by the Hindus; they are, however, limited by governmental institutions in exercising their responsibility for its maintenance.

For the citizens of Mandal, then – and indeed for rural Indian society in general – the built environment where religious worship is conducted is unquestionably associable with the religious practitioners who use it, and, abstractly, with the religion itself. The layer of identity of 'historical monument', added to the Jami Masjid by the Archaeological Survey, is a definition and perception of the building which the villagers cannot integrate into their understanding, or into their actions. It would be not be conceivable, for example, that they consider the mosque as a part of the national patrimony, to be preserved and valued for its function as a sign and representative of 15th-century architecture. The Hindus, especially, would not consider it within the bounds of their rights or duties to exert additional pressure upon the ASI to conduct repairs on the Jami Masjid so that the building stands for posterity. The Muslims have been made aware of the identity of the building as a historical source and, to some degree, of the necessity for its preservation in this capacity, not out of their everyday experience but out of their dealings and frustrations with the ASI. The Jami Masjid, then, is primarily a place of worship, and undeniably associated with Islam.

As seen in the above example, Mandal should encourage architectural historians to reassess the religious identification of architecture in scholarship. The religious categorization that has been a mainstay of the study of architecture in India clearly does not reflect the religious identification that is practiced by those for whom the building is alive and integrated into their daily lives. This dissonance does not mean that religious categorization ought to be eliminated altogether, but rather that the application and aims of this intellectual tool must be re-examined.

13 The majority of information regarding this state of affairs in the vicinity of the Jami Masjid was obtained through a personal interview with Diwan Yusuf Muhammad on October 1, 1997. In addition to his occupation as a tailor, which was carried on by the male members of his family for generations, Diwan Yusuf was part of the Khidmat al-Azhar Committee, based at the Jami Masjid, and encharged with all matters involving the building. In this capacity, he was also considered the spokesperson for the Muslim community of Mandal.

14 Diwan Yusuf Muhammad, personal communication, 1-X-97.

Nek Chand's Garden: Chandigargh, India

text by nilay oza photos by t. luke young

In the making of Chandigarh, Le Corbusier's sole contact with the dyons of Indian Administration proved to be a confirmation of what, throughout the course of his career, he had come to accept as a certitude: The path to social order was through a benign and benevolent administration.[1] By spatially conditioning the urbanity of Chandigarh, Corbusier made what is 'officially permissible' and what 'impermissible' very clear. Chandigarh was thus defined in the administration's consciousness as a city with a hermetic order that the generic Indian city did not possess. It is this distinction, in sharp relief both physically and administratively, that would define the short history of Chandigarh. On the cover of *La Villa Radieuse,* Corbusier defines his urbanism thus:

> *"The rational and poetic monuments set up in the midst of contingencies: "people places, culture, topographies, climates; only to be judged as they relate to the entity – MAN."*

In Chandigarh's case, these contingencies would include the twenty-six villages, comprising 30,000 people, removed to make way for the city. These villages were converted, in part, into labor colonies. "In spite of the city's stated objectives of providing amenities for the poorest of the poor, by 1975 15% of its population of 500,000 lived in squatter colonies."[2] These clumps of humanity lying within and around the matrix of the city are still kept in continual motion by the authorities. They have become, in the curiously officious parlance of bureaucracies, "informal sectors." Simply put, they are deviants from the official norm of Chandigarh.

Another urban deviant, of a quite different nature than that of squatter colonies but no less troublesome to the official culture, is what is now called "Nek Chand's Garden".[3] It is a landscape made from salvaged bits of urban detritus produced during and after the making of Chandigarh. It was conceived of by its builder Nek Chand as a mythical kingdom, with a program that included, among other features, a hall of audience, quarters for the queen, and army barracks. Built as a clandestine project from the debris that the city produced, it has grown to over 25 acres during the 30 years it has taken to build it. As a Road Works Inspector working for the Public Works Department, he was a minor functionary in the Chandigarh project. Nek Chand would work only at nights, in the light and stench of burning tires and in constant fear of discovery by the authorities. A vast gorge in the woods to the east of the Capitol complex (immediately behind the High Court) proved ideally suited to his project. It also supplied the rudiments for this "vast ruins of a fort", an image he held of this kingdom well before he started.

In his garden one comes across figures that seem to recall tribals staring, almost transfixed, at the Capitol complex, at what was once their land. Does Nek Chand have a political message in his sculptural madness? Apparently not, for according to Nek Chand this garden was for himself, and was never intended to be looked at by anyone.[4] More over, he does not see the making of Chandigarh as negative. To someone like Nek Chand, the skeletal beauty of the rapidly growing but unfinished city marked India's destined emergence into modernity, and could have been nothing short of inspirational. He seemed to admire Le Corbusier, and this admiration was not born out of ignorance. He was keenly aware of the processes of construction used in the buildings.

While using the waste from Chandigarh and constructing a labyrinthine sculpture from it, Nek Chand seems never to take aesthetic recourse in the rationalized environment around him. He is, in a way, picking up pieces as he goes about the task of constructing his dream, never looking up to see what dropped them. The nature of his creation is thus, in every aspect of its making, an anti-thesis to the ideals on which Chandigarh was founded. Its inherent spontaneity mocks the self-importance assumed by Chandigarh's architecture, yet does not seek to be a political act. Today his work, despite its creator, is a form of protest, not so much against an architectural idiom as against an urban order and a administration that perpetrates it. He was a squatter, except one that was to bring the ethos of re-use from a domestic to the urban realm, from the realm of the profane to that of art.

1 see further Brian Brace Taylor, Technology, Society, and Social Control in Le Corbusier's Cite de Refuge, Paris 1933, Equerre, 1980
2 Madhu Sarin, "Chandigarh Oggi", Casabella, Feb 1989, p 16
3 For a discussion on the nature of this deviance see further Devyani Jain, Out of the Normative, Unpub-lished Thesis, C.E.P.T, Ahmedabad, 1995
4 S.S.Bhatti, Nek Chand's Testament of Creativity, Raw Vision, Spring 1989, p. 22.
– photo credit for first image: Maggie Super

Inverted Office N51-113

toshihiro komatsu

The Inverted Office N51-113 is situated at the back entrance gate of the sculpture courtyard. Its interior is freely accessed from the small alley that is uncontrolled by local parking regulations. As a result, the "interior" of the pavilion is potentially occupied by the public as an extension of this alley.

In the fall of 1998 I reconstructed a full scale inverted replica of this office as a free standing pavilion extracted from the building proper. I carefully replicated the office using identical materials to create a 1:1 inverse scale model. By inverting the walls of my office, interior and exterior surfaces are turned inside-out , transforming my private space into a public sign.
– Toshihiro Komatsu

This is an interior shot of the inverted office. In Japan, Toshihiro Komatsu grew up in a small village where the heart of the town was a Shinto Shrine ... a place of gathering as well as contemplation. The Inverted Office is at once a critique of society – by creating a dialogue between spaces of work and rest – and a solution – by creating a space of gathering and contemplation.
– Constance Lai


during construction

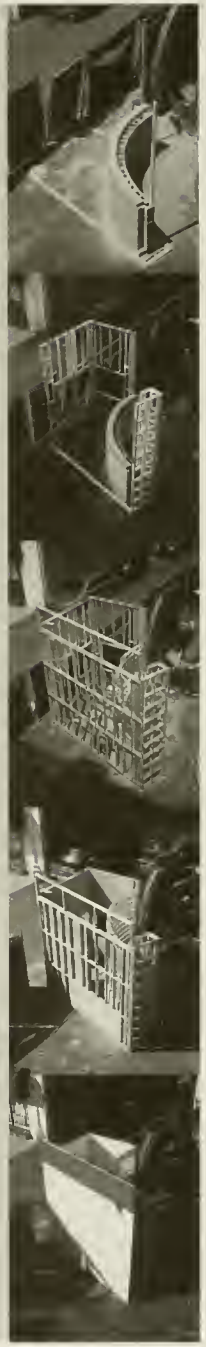
completed pavilion

The process of building the Inverted Studio required the artist not only to research building materials that were foreign to his architectural vocabulary, but also to learn how to put them together.

The dialogue between the local hardware store salesman, defensive union members, the artist and people just passing by is as much part of this project as the physical object. These ephemeral conversations did not merely reveal to the artist building conventions, but also how personal relationships within a society can form, revolving around the simple initiative of an artist trying to create the inverse of his office.

It is therefore revealing to view this project as a process of learning about foreign building materials and methods; about understanding a different culture; about interacting socially with foreigners no matter who they might be, and ultimately creating an urban space for everyone.

– Constance Lai



Orientalism and Propaganda: the construction of a wartime national identity

akiko takenaka

Japan has donned an assortment of masks, varying from the exotic land of Zen and geisha girls to an "Asian Tiger," the economic superpower of the 80s. It is also remembered as the country that aggressively invaded China in the 30s, and the disreputable enemy of World War II that cast a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Particularly during wartime, many of the ways the country was perceived from the outside were an outcome of intentional image-making by the government and the people. Such images are created for a specific audience with a distinct purpose. During the 1930s, in the political turbulence prior to World War II, the national image desired by the government was in conflict with the style that a generation of Japanese architects were trying to create - a style capable of representing a modern country. This tension can be observed in the curious differences that arose in the creation and the reception of two Japanese national pavilions designed for two international expositions in the 30s.

Japan has a long record of attendance at international expositions, starting with the exposition in Vienna of 1873. It has exhibited national pavilions at seventeen occasions prior to World War II, but it was not until the Paris exposition of 1937 (Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la vie Moderne) that Japan exhibited its first pavilion not modeled after religious architecture, castles, or historical edifices. (Fig. 1)[1] The Paris pavilion was designed by Junzo Sakakura, then a young architect training under Le Corbusier in Paris. Rather than looking to past precedents for inspiration, Sakakura designed a building with the characteristics of his master's works, that also incorporated elements of traditional Japanese residential architecture. This first non-traditional Japanese pavilion so successfully represented the modernist theme of the Paris exposition while maintaining Japanese qualities that the French government awarded Sakakura the *Grand Prix* in design. The first Japanese foray into a modern national design on an international stage was an overwhelming success.

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That is why it is so curious that just two short years later, for the 1939 New York World's Fair, the Japanese authorities insisted on a conservative design modeled on a traditional Shinto shrine. (Fig. 2) Even more surprising was that this decision by the Japanese officials was taken in the face of the overwhelmingly futuristic bent of the 1939 fair, with its Buck Rogers "Building the World of Tomorrow" theme. The Japanese pavilion was one of the few traditionally styled national pavilions at the Fair. Based on my archival research, I challenge the usual interpretation that the Paris pavilion is a brilliant example of modernist Japanese architecture, while the pavilion at the New York World's Fair is a "humiliating regression" in the history of Japanese architecture. What follows challenges this interpretation by investigating the process of creation of the two pavilions. In fact, the pressure of an aggressive Japanese military state, as discovered in records of communication to exposition architects and officials, reveal the design for the New York pavilion as a sophisticated and

successful political strategy in apprehension of World War II – part of a larger propaganda effort by the government to create a peaceful image of prewar Japan. The more typically hailed pavilion for Paris, examined in light of this, can now be read as a failed attempt at the governmental manipulation of artistic production.

The design for the national pavilion at Paris had undergone many changes prior to its presentation in the foreign context, due to significant disagreements between the governmental authorities in charge of the exhibition and the architects involved in the design of the pavilion. The pavilion design was originally selected in a closed competition supervised by a Tokyo University professor and the Paris Exposition Committee, and was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[2] But the selected design - a glass and steel pavilion influenced by the International Style - by Kunio Maekawa, a young modernist trained in France, did not receive approval due to what the government saw as a lack of Japanese aspects. (Fig. 3) The government re-selected another entry, a "traditional Japanese style structure with tiled roof for the tower ... black lacquered pillars and ornamented whitewash walls, randomly decorated with red lacquered pillars."[3] However, the opportunity to "modernize" this government-mandated design appeared, since the construction was to be undertaken in France with the exclusive use of French materials and workers. Junzo Sakakura – working under Le Corbusier in Paris at the time

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– was commissioned to oversee its construction and make any necessary adjustments and translations for the workers. That Sakakura took great liberties with the design was concealed in his ambiguous comment that the pavilion would "demonstrate a Japanese-like quality making the best use of French materials." He revised the original design by infusing traditional elements, such as the slender pillars and ornamented walls, into his own innovative but markedly Corbusian style. In the words of architectural historian Shoichi Inoue, Sakakura's pavilion was an exercise in "digesting the 'historical style of Japan' into a 'progressive style of the West'."[4] It received the *Grand Prix*, and the design was praised by an American magazine as having achieved "in steel and glass those qualities which characterize traditional building in wood, and which now are ideals of modern architects all over the world."[5]

The Japanese modernists regarded this incident as a victory over the old-fashioned government authorities. Sakakura's success in Paris raised in them a new awareness of the ideological significance of architectural design on an international stage. But the anticipation they held for the next event – the New York World's Fair – remained unfulfilled.

This pavilion was designed by Yasuo Matsui, a Japanese architect practicing in New York. Its interior and displays were by Iwao Yamawaki, a former member of the Bauhaus. In the words of the Japanese Commissioner General to the fair, this pavilion was to be an "expression of magnificence" through "simplicity of form," while at the same time "equipped with the latest technologies of Japan."[6] The pavilion's dual intention was apparent in the displays, which presented both the modern and the traditional by the integration of technology and craftsmanship. Photographic murals and montage – cutting edge technology of the time – covered the interior walls of the Hall of Nations, which housed the traditional arts and crafts of Japan. An innovative movie projector, capable of showing films in daylight, projected exotic scenes and images of the cultural activities of Japan. While the technological form was modern, its content seemed old fashioned, especially when compared to the other, overwhelmingly futuristic, theme pavilions at the fair. If an attempt was made to create a certain image through the presentation, it was lost in the confusing selection of the displays. What was the image that Japan was trying to project in 1939?

The government's preference for presenting the traditional instead of the modern, and the arts and crafts instead of technology and industry, was based on their long standing experience. The first impression obtained by the Japanese when comparing their own exhibits to those of the European nations was at the Vienna exposition

of 1873. Government officials sent to observe the fair were dismayed at the technological immaturity of their own contribution, and astounded by the advances demonstrated by the European participants. Japanese arts and crafts were well received at this occasion. The officials rightly analyzed at the time that this favorable reception was the result of curiosity, due to "the difference in the nature of the Japanese exhibits from those of the European nations."[7] This analysis, however, seems to have strongly determined the Japanese display of its own culture for the next 60 years.

During preparation for the New York World's Fair, wire correspondence was constantly exchanged between the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Japan and the Japanese Consulate General of New York. This correspondence reveals the difficulties that the Japanese government was facing concerning their presentation strategy. The theme of the fair called for an exhibition of progress, something that could well be demonstrated in a modern style pavilion not unlike that presented in Paris. The theme troubled those concerned that modern architecture in Japan, "whose beauty resides in its minimalist simplicity, will not have enough prominence when placed among the Western pavilions."[8] Comments made in correspondence suggested that the pavilion be designed in a "style easily associated with traditional Japanese architecture" because "the general American public is used to large scaled buildings and wide streets, has no

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knowledge of Japanese culture, and will not be able to appreciate the spirit of true Japanese architecture."[9]

As well, the Advisory Committee for the Fair in New York suggested that the scientific and industrial progress of Japan was "so far behind our own and that of European nations as to be wholly uninteresting and undramatic" and "American interest in Far East industrial progress would be negligible." The American committee concluded that "indigenous exhibits such as rugs and porcelain" should be appropriate as the exhibits of the Far Eastern countries.[10] Of course, the planners in Japan were by now well aware of these opinions.

In light of this, the 1939 pavilion seems to have been based on what the government felt was a safe design. The exhibits were in keeping with the stereotypical image of the country already held by the audience. A presentation that introduced science and technology as secondary to cultural aspects was unlikely to raise any controversies, since that was what the audience was expecting to receive from Japan. And in 1939, it was particularly crucial for the Japanese government to keep the status quo of this commonly held image because of the political uncertainties building up between the two countries. At the time, Japan was long in conflict with China, invading and occupying various regions, and the American view of Japan was starting to change. Since the United States had trade relations with both countries, the international situation was quite delicate. In the summer of 1939, for example, the American government abolished their Treaty of Commerce with Japan.

In such an atmosphere, the Japanese government needed to carefully reconsider their country's presentation strategies for a fair to take place in New York. I have uncovered the suggestion of an unmistakably radical presentation strategy in the records of wire correspondences. In 1938, the Japan International Press Photo Association of New York advised that, in consideration of the relationship between the two countries, the main objective of their presentation should be to "banish the public opinion prevailing in the United States which mistakes our country for an enemy or an invader." This was to be performed by "high-handedly promoting the ideals of peace." Thus the exhibition should present "a traditional Japanese spirit which is neither aggressive nor jingoistic', and present a discourse emphasizing the significant role played by the United States in introducing modern culture to this "fairy tale-like dream island." Furthermore, the press association instructed that the poster for the Japanese exhibit should depict "Japanese girls in traditional attire" with captions inviting the visitor to experience the "changeless, timeless Japan."[11] (Fig. 4)

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Thus, in 1939, the Japanese government willfully "orientalized" itself. That is to say, it presented Japan as a peaceful, exotic land that was not as advanced as the United States or the European countries. The text and the image on the poster suggest an Orientalist presentation of a culture, established by the creation of a temporal and spatial distance between the observer and the observed.[12] While today, we frequently make such Saidian analysis of Eastern countries "orientalized" by the West, the method of analysis needs to be more complex in this case. For in 1939 (if not earlier), Japan intentionally orientalized itself - its own images - to its advantage. Through the pavilion in the 1939 fair, the country reflected the orientalizing stereotypes projected upon it back to Western eyes. This was, of course, not a true illustration of the state of development and capabilities within the country. For example, when much of the world was struggling to recover from the Depression in the 1930s, Japan's annual growth rate averaged 5 percent of GNP. By 1939, buildings designed in the International Style were being built in Japan, and engineers were fully capable of constructing large scaled buildings. As a trading nation, Japan had already become a major exporter of manufactured products and a major importer of raw materials.[13] Japan was also itself colonialist within its sphere of influence in the Philippines, Korea, and Manchuria.

Japan was in fact not at all "changeless and timeless", but becoming increasingly aggressive and militaristic. Japanese colonialism in Asia had proceeded under the theory of pan-Asianism - essentially, a theory of domination. Pan-Asian ideology, prevalent in wartime Japan, situated Japan as the leader of East Asia, with a mission to unite the countries in the entire area so they would not be oppressed or endangered by the West. Pan-Asian thinking was celebrated by the government, partly for the justification of their aggression in China (an unexpected development initiated in 1931 by Japan's expeditionary forces in North China), and also as a response to the need for a new national ideology under which it could unite its citizens in prosecuting the war. Interestingly, pan-Asianism looked both eastward and westward. The Japanese government issued the "New Order for East Asia" in 1938 in order to liberate the citizenry's minds from the unconscious following of familiar Western patterns of thought. The idea was propagated that pan-Asian unity was the antithesis of nationalism, individualism, liberalism, materialism, and other negative conditions associated with Western countries. Emphasis was placed on rebuilding, regenerating, reawakening, and rebirth - all indicative of Japanese self-consciousness about ending "Western-dominated patterns and restoring Asia to its past greatness." A treatise written in 1939 on cultural policy toward China states that the Japanese had for too long looked down on "things Oriental" and depended upon the West. It stressed that Japan should "totally put an end to the long period of dependence on, and copying of, the West," and overcome, on their own terms, their status as late-comers to industrialization.[14] Whereas earlier modernizing attempts were made with the West as the model, an effort by the Japanese is made for the first time under pan-Asianism to look back upon themselves. This is why the displays in the 1939 pavilion presented such things as a reproduction of the Liberty Bell in pearls. The natural ingenuity and improvements to industry shown in Japan's own, developed spheres of production, "dramatize the pearl culture industry which today employs 1,000 people from Japan and sets out annually about 3 million oysters." Thus the ideology behind the 1939 pavilion was both aggressive and coy about its presentation to the West. While the Japanese press association produced advertising copy for New York declaring "changeless, timeless Japan," at the same time it internally denounced "an

ideology of an eternal peace, a true peace, and a world peace established without armament" as "absurd, but foolishly supported by a wide population in a liberalist country such as the United States."[15]

But the intentions invested by the government in the 1939 pavilion, the sheer subtlety of their expression of a modern national identity and a non-Western model of technology and production, were never understood by architects in Japan. The simple, modernist triumph in Paris in 1937 augmented negative attitudes in the architectural community about the New York pavilion. The pavilion drew only severe criticism from Japan's modern architects. The sophisticated intention behind the 1939 presentation went unrecognized, and its subtlety was overlooked. This is unfortunate, because a similar example, from which Japanese modernists might have learned, existed close at hand in the German pavilion, also seen at the Paris Exposition of 1937. (Figure 5)

The German pavilion, created during Germany's extreme National Socialist regime, reveals interesting similarities to the concept and design strategy employed by the Japanese authorities in the 1939 Fair. The intention of the Third Reich in its 1937 presentation was to "market itself in Paris both as a technologically advanced nation and as a people rooted in timeless tradition." The country's devoted participation in the exposition was meant to illustrate its commitment to "world peace" and the "reconstruction of a healthy and solid economy."[16]

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In the German pavilion, simultaneous references were made to a number of historical antecedents - a classical temple, a medieval church, and a huge ancient sarcophagus - in order to achieve the desired monumentality. In quite a parallel, the Japanese pavilion at the 1939 Fair had been modeled after the Ise Shrine of the Shinto sect, and adapted the exterior wall from the Kyoto Imperial Palace in order to express the "most modernized form of linear beauty."[17] The two pavilions were in agreement with the modernist aesthetic that rejected excessive ornament. Both employed steel for supporting structure, yet concealed it with a facade to give the desired impression - the German pavilion was finished with native German limestone and swastika-patterned gold and red mosaic tile, the Japanese pavilion with white stucco and lacquered pilasters. Further parallels are found in the material displayed inside. The German display consisted of "static and traditional art forms for its visual propaganda, intended to shift attention away from the militarism of National Socialism towards the cultural and scientific achievements of the regime."[18] I have previously made similar analyses of the Japanese displays at the two Fairs, and also of the various "cultural propaganda" in Japanese journals of the 1930s.[19]

The creation of a national image to present to a foreign audience, during a time of an increasingly volatile political relations, was an extremely demanding endeavor for Japan in the 1930s. The Japanese government was well aware of its historical struggle to formulate a national identity. The highly orchestrated production of this pavilion is a testament to the sophisticated balancing act required between aesthetics, politics, and modernization when presenting or concealing one's national identity or intentions to others. By 1939, various approaches to the representation of national identity through architectural design had already been taken: ornamentation of Western-style architecture with Japanese elements; reinterpretation of Western architecture to claim as their own; and concealment of technology acquired from the West inside a traditional Japanese design. The 1939 pavilion used the third approach - it was constructed out of steel and concrete, albeit covered with stucco and topped with pitched roof. Yet, it was considered obsolete by contemporary architects, who argued more naively for a modern style without awareness of its

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political impact. But the much maligned 1939 pavilion forecasted the architectural trend to come. In the 1940s, under the strong influence of ultranationalism, these same modern architects began to willingly engage in nationalistic design. This is seen clearly in the competitiondesigns submitted in the 1940s for projects associated with Japanese colonial endeavors in East Asia. (Fig. 6) Fortunately for the reputations of these designers, the outbreak of World War II saw little of this colonial Japanese architecture built. So, these once modernist, then wartime nationalist, architects have never been forced to come to terms with their easy compliance with the political agenda. With few colonial Japanese buildings realized, their design portfolios are not stained with the built evidence of this nationalism. The 1939 pavilion, then, is its most resounding built testament.

footnotes
NYPL: the archives of the New York World's Fair 1939/40, on deposit in the manuscript division of the New York Public Library.
DRO: the Diplomatic Records Office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Tokyo, Japan.

1 The design of most of the pavilions was an eclectic style with combination of elements derived from several historical buildings to achieve a design easily associated as typically Japanese. In the case of the Phoenix Pavilion at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago 1893 for example, the presentation consisted of three buildings connected by corridors each designed in styles representing three different time periods. The pavilion in Paris 1900 was said to be designed after Horyuji, a temple, but with many ornaments not present in the original structure.

2 The Paris Exposition Committee was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Trade, the Association for the Promotion of International Culture, and Japan Trade Association. (The English naming of these groups come from the translation of "Tokyo - Paris 1936-37" written by Tadayoshi Fujiki and translated by Bill and Lou Tingey, in Process Architecture: Sakakura Associates - Half a Century in Step with Postwar Japanese Modern ism, vol. 110, 1993, 31-38). The competition was supervised by Hideto Kishida, a professor of architecture at Tokyo University, as a competition among five young architects.

3 "Pari-haku Nihonkan (The Jn of International Culture, and Japan Trade Association. (The English naming of these groups come from the translation of "Tokyo - Paris 1936-37" written by Tadayoshi Fujiki and translated by Bill and Lou Tingey, in Process Architecture: Sakakura Associates - Half a Century in Step with Postwar Japanese Modernism, vol. 110, 1993, 31-38). The competition was supervised by Hideto Kishida, a professor of architecture at Tokyo University, as a competition among five young architects. "Pari-haku Nihonkan (The Japanese Pavilion at Paris Exposition)," Kenchiku Sekai, September 1936, 35. All translations from Japanese are the author's unless otherwise noted.

4 Shoichi Inoue, "Pari Hakurankai Nihonkan 1937 (The Japanese pavilion at Paris Exposition 1937)" in Bankokuhakurankai: Sono Rekishi to Yakuwari (International expositions: their history and roles), Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai ed., (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1985), 147.

5 Elizabeth Mock, "The Paris Exposition," Magazine of Art 30, May 1937, 269.

6 NYPL, Box: 101; File P0.3 Japan, Foreign Participation.

7 From "Nihon to Bankokuhaku (Japan and international expositions)" in Ryuichi Hamaguchi and Hiroshi Yamaguchi, Bankokuhaku Monogatari (The story of international expositions), (Tokyo: Kajima Kenkyujo Shuppankai, 1966), 138-170.
8 DRO: from Ambassador Kaname Wakasugi in New York to Foreign Minister Hirota in Tokyo, February 19, 1938.

9 DRO: Wakasugi to Hirota, May 16, 1938.

10 NYPL: Box 352; File PR2.01. Far East Advisory Sub-committee, Foreign Participation Advisory Committee, Public Relations. From the minutes of "Meeting of the Advisory Sub-Committee on the Far East." Dated February 4, 1937.

11 All quotes in the paragraph are from: DRO: July 8, 1938. Also, in a meeting of the Japanese Committee for the New York Fair, a strategy "to alleviate the negative feelings of the Americans towards Japan," that they "make prodigious participation ... and publicize our interest and enthusiasm in the maintenance of a harmonious relationship with the country" was suggested. (From a progress report dated June 1, 1938)

12 The method in which Orientalist artists and writers had constructed the "exotic Oriental world" by the creation of temporal and spatial distance, is discussed in detail by Edward Said in Orientalism (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

13 The information comes from Japan in War and Peace by John W. Dower (New York: New Press, 1995) in which Dower gives detailed account of the growth in pre-World War II Japan, with and argument that Japan's position in global economy today is not the result of the post-occupation period, but of the rapid growth of the country in the early 1930s.

14 All quotes on the governmental policies of 1938 and 1939 are from: Akira Iriye, Power and Culture: the Japanese-American War 1941-1945. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1981, 7-9.

15 DRO: Correspondence dated July 8, 1938.

16 Karen A. Fiss. "The German Pavilion," in Art and Power: Europe under the dictators 1930-45, 108-110.

17 DRO: Correspondence from Wakasugi to Hirota, on the basic policy of the pavilion and garden design; dated February 19, 1938.
18 Ibid., 109.

19 See, Akiko Takenaka, The Construction of a Wartime Identity: the Japanese Pavilion at New York World's Fair 1939/40, Master's thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where I have made analyses of Japanese imagery being exported overseas in the 1930s and 40s through a variety of media. Included are Nippon and Contemporary Japan, examples of Japanese journals translated into English and other European languages. In these publications, the foreign policy and overseas achievements of the country were interspersed with texts introducing the cultural side of Japan. In my thesis, I suggest that this is a similar strategy of presentation that is observed in the pavilion and its displays - both the textual and architectural presentation s conceal political reality within the veil of culture.

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thresholds 18

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design & money

The design and construction of the physical environment shapes much of our society's economy and consumes much its wealth. The distribution of this wealth has become more concentrated in recent years, as economic gains have disproportionately accrued to the already wealthy. As this disparity magnifies, so too, perhaps, does the influence of a minority on the physical world. A financial elite - made up of corporations, institutions, and a few wealthy individuals - can offer most of the commissions that support 'high' design. In exchange for that support, though, architects are expected to further the financial, social and personal aims of their patrons. Those goals, though private, collectively define the terms of the public space and culture. ***Thresholds 18*** asks how our understanding of the profession, aesthetics, and design is affected by the system that finances them.

If all art relies on patronage, architecture does so on a unique scale. Big, expensive, and long lasting, a building has stakeholders, functions, and demands outside the bounds of traditional art patronage. What does the concept of 'avant—garde' mean when applied to architecture? Can it exist without a specifically social agenda? When self—promotion so often drives patronage, how could such an agenda avoid co—option by private interests? Avant—garde forms can be as much about wealth and power as about the development of ideas or culture. High budget 'high design' is often the wellspring of our aesthetic sensibility. What happens to the built environment when the exceptional case sets the standard for mainstream designers (with mainstream budgets)? How does this method of disseminating forms shape the physical world?

Architecture creates the public space, and sets its terms of interaction. Similarly, the cost of a building affects both the physical object and the aesthetic criteria we use to understand that object. How does the status of architecture within culture shape our aesthetic judgement of that architecture? Do *avant-garde* forms really advance culture, or just spur new consumption? Do refined aesthetics just create new social and financial barriers to participation? If so, how can design be anything but socially conservative?

Design and construction technology creates new spatial and formal possibilities, and makes existing buildings and components more quickly obsolete. Staying on the technology curve is often expensive. Does that expense set technology's meaning by controlling its use? Could cheaper building technology change the relationship between wealth and architecture? This same advancement creates new forms of infrastructure, and new possibilities for aesthetic intervention. How does this affect a designer's responsibilities?

Design must serve both a private client and the public good. How can a designer respect, or even evaluate, the needs of public and private? What happens to critical distance when jobs are involved? How can art and architecture transcend these distinctions while respecting them both?

Can you understand design without understanding how it's paid for?

deadline march 1, 1999

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No culture can develop without a social basis, without a source of stable income. And in the case of the avant-garde, this was provided by an elite among that ruling class of that society from which it is assumed itself to be cut off, but to which it has always remained attached by an umbilical cord of gold.
–Clement Greenberg

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thresholds 17 -"asian" - errata

Please take into account the following changes as you read the issue. Thank you.

Constance Lai and Andrew Miller
editors

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47 How Buildings Divide and Unite Us: The Case of Mandal (Gujarat, India). By Ritu Bhatt and Alka Patel.

47 The image caption should read Jami Masjid, Mandal.

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63 Pan-Asianism vs. Changeless, Timeless Japan: The Construction of a Wartime National Identity By Akiko Takenaka

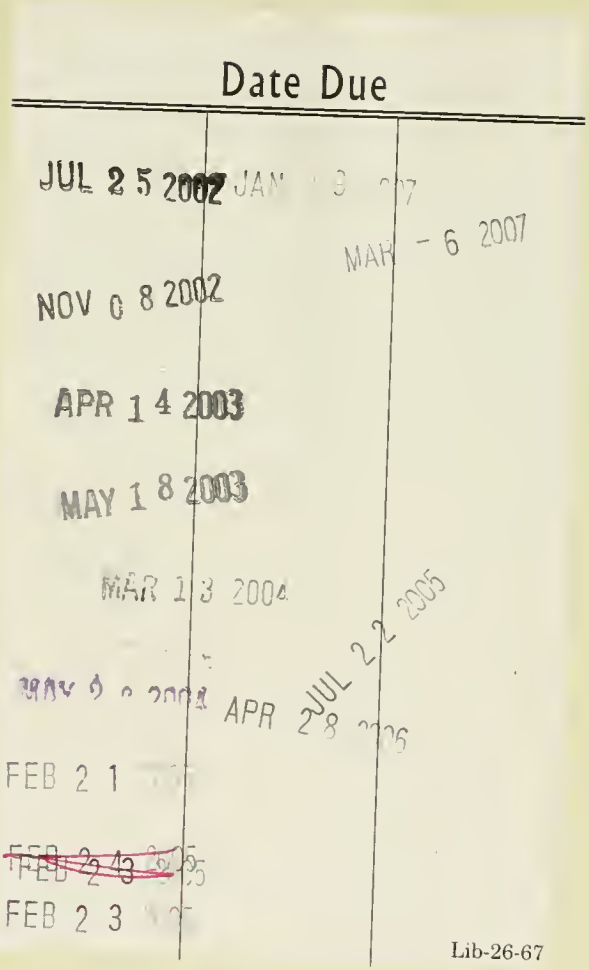
63 In line 3 of the middle column, *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la vie Moderne* should be italicized.

68 All the italics in the footnotes have been erroneously deleted in printing.

title change

Akiko Takenaka's article should be titled:

63 Pan-Asianism vs. Changeless, Timeless Japan:
The Construction of a Wartime National Identity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